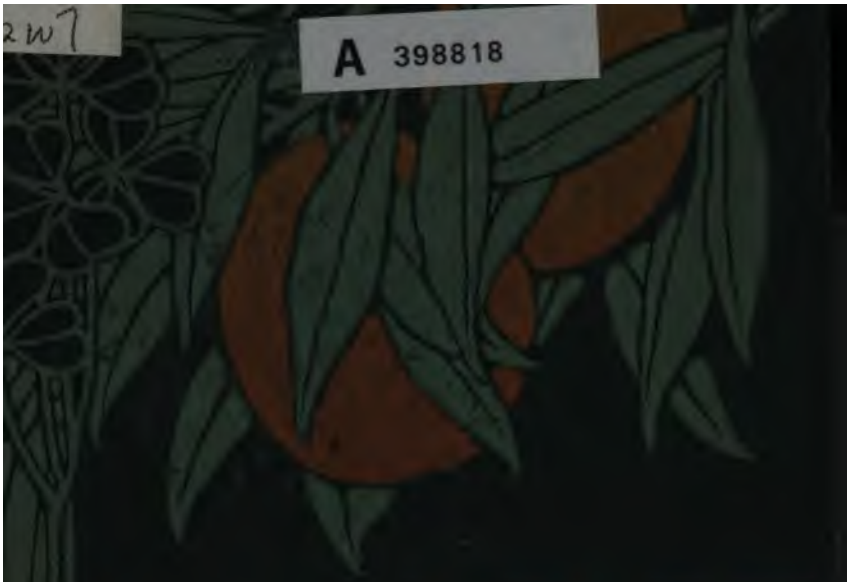
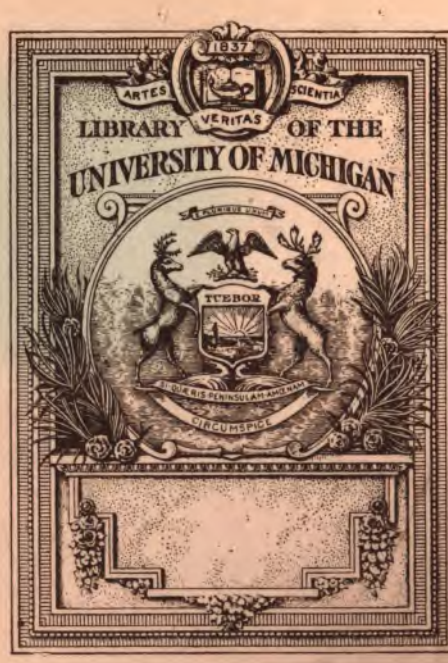


HE LAND OF THE LIVING

AUDE RADFORD WARREN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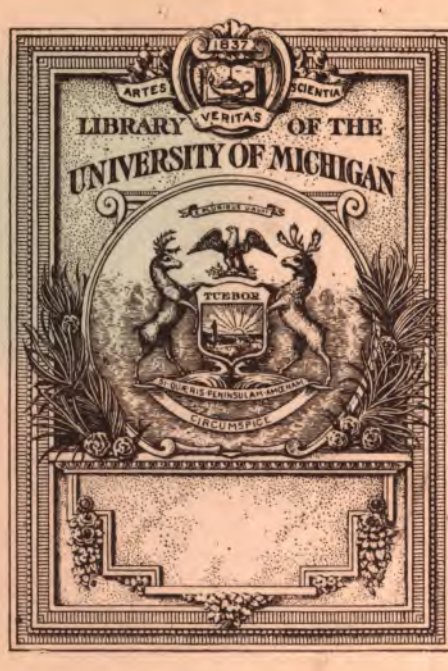
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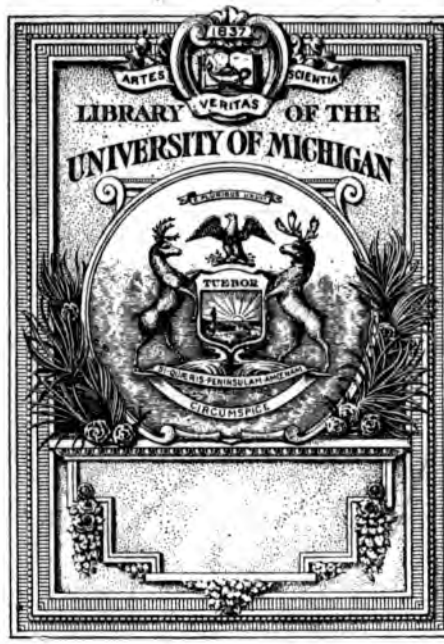
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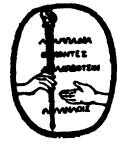
MOUNT CARMEL

02

THE LAND OF THE LIVING

A Novel

BY
MAUDE RADFORD WARREN



NEW YORK AND LONDON
HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
MCMVIII

Published July, 1908.

TO
HARRIET CRANDALL

Published July, 1908.

TO
HARRIET CRANDALL

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THE LAND OF THE LIVING

THE LAND OF THE LIVING

I

CALLAHAN'S BREAD ON THE WATERS

IN after days big John Callahan liked to say that the famous Hugh MacDermott owed to him his real start in life. Callahan was walking along dirty Ewing Street, smiling with the mechanical amiability generic toward bosses, when the door of a squalid cottage opposite him was thrown open, and a stout, flaming Irishwoman hurtled forward, holding a little boy by the neck exactly as if he had been a vicious puppy. With hysterical scolding she threw him into the street, and retreated, slamming the door.

Big John paused in the act of conveying some raisins to his mouth from his left-hand pocket. He did not want to step on the child, though he hoped to get away from the weeping he expected. But the boy shed no tears; he picked himself up slowly, rubbed a bruised arm, looked commiser-

atingly at his torn sleeve, and then remarked to Callahan, with an odd, twisted smile:

"Sure, father always said Mrs. Flanagan was turrible energetic."

Callahan, of necessity a reader of men, looked down into the little pointed face. The boy's hair fell in matted black locks over a broad forehead. His eyebrows, strongly arched, gave him a delicately interrogative look, as if he were anxious to know how the world was going to take him. His thin mouth seemed to help the interrogation; a perpetual question was trembling behind it, and yet he did not seem to expect anything for himself, as his surprised smile testified when Callahan gave him a handful of raisins. But it was his eyes that made the face attractive; they could darken to keen brown when he was thinking or lighten to gray when he was dreaming; the eyes of the Celt, mystic with the visions of ages of poets, soft with the lure of ages of lovers, and fiery with the memories of warriors; eyes that could grow deep with the heritage of countless haunting sorrows or exalted with brief, poignant joys; the eyes of the race that gives the world Romance.

Callahan was interested by his survey.

"Name?" he queried.

"Hugh MacDermott."

"A good name," replied Callahan, who was patriotic. "Ah, the days of ould," he glowered, darkly, "and now a MacDermott is thrown in the street!"

"Maybe a Flanagan threw down a MacDermott in the old days," suggested Hugh; "but I bet not," he added. clinching his fists, "unless the Flanagan was a lady."

Callahan beamed on him appreciatively.

"That's right. Irishmen is always polite and kind to the ladies," he said. "But so Biddy Flanagan threw you out? Bedad, if 'twasn't that Flanagan's my best precinct captain I'd go in and deafen her ears with my opinion of her, so I would."

Hugh's sense of humor was two-edged, and he smiled.

"I remember now," went on Callahan; "your father was blew up last month in the glucose facthory."

Tears came to the child's eyes, and he looked resolutely downward, drawing little parallel lines on the dirty sidewalk with his bony toes.

"Well, it's hard lines," said big John Callahan, vaguely. "I know from Flanagan that Biddy Flanagan's fist ain't light."

"It's hard lines on her, too," said Hugh, in a low tone—"seven childher to feed that don't get any too much."

"Well," said Callahan, irritated by the hold the child was gaining on him, "why don't you do something for your keep?"

Hugh made no reply.

"I suppose you'll be answering back in a minute that you do," Callahan went on, testily—"rocking the cradle and that. Why don't you sell papers?"

"I do," said Hugh, "but I ain't very big yet, and the bigger boys steal my customers and sometimes the papers."

"You don't look to me as if you'd ever be big enough to hit back," said Callahan, disparagingly.

A hint of spirit showed in Hugh's eyes.

"Well, I can run errands if I can't fight two boys at once," he said. 'Twas me carried you word that Larry

Nolan was going to jump his bail, and then ran back to show you where he was hiding."

"Were you that boy?" asked Callahan, warmly. "Well, I've looked for you since. You can bring yourself round to my place on Saturdays and Sundays, and I'll give you enough errands to run to pay your way with the Flanagans."

"All right," Hugh said, gratefully. "I'll work hard as I can for you. Maybe if I tell Mrs. Flanagan she'll let me have my dinner."

As the child started gingerly up the steps of the Flanagan cottage, a look of pity came into Callahan's eyes.

"Well, it 'd be mighty harrd on a father to see others knocking round his orphans," he reflected, as he walked homeward. His little, weather-beaten place was in the northwest corner of the ward, where the houses were pushed back to make room for a dilapidated little park with a fountain in the middle which did not run. The "keep-off-the-grass" signs were monuments to the permanence of human hope. When the sun shone, the pouring yellow came down with a dun-colored cast, because of the thick particles of dust in the air. And this was the prettiest part of the ward.

Callahan's house had once been dark gray; there were uncertain green blinds at the windows and a rusty knocker on the warped door. In the summer the querulous chatter of nesting sparrows came from under the cornices. It was a ramshackle structure, sidling up to a comfortable row of brick houses—"Con. Row," almost the only decent buildings in the ward, certainly the only ones with a look of home about them. They were owned by and named for those genial men who had gained the right to them by preying

on their less shrewd but not unwilling brethren. Callahan was occasionally asked by his admirers why he didn't have one of these big houses, since he had as good a right as any to them. He generally replied that he was comfortable as he was. As a matter of fact, his hold on the ward was increased precisely because every one knew he might so live if he chose, but that he preferred to be nearer the level of his supporters. And here, as to a temple of hope, came little Hugh MacDermott.

Callahan was a business man, and he had intended to put his connection with Hugh on a strictly business basis. He should have suspected himself when he found himself insisting on the fact, instead of taking it for granted. Hugh was quick and silent and useful, a good machine, and that was the beginning and end of it. But Callahan was unable to treat the child as a machine. Hugh had a faculty for compelling attention. His thin, wistful, humorous face seemed always waiting for something. Callahan's resentment sometimes showed in impatient speeches.

"I wish," he said once, "that you would try not to have bruises on your face. When you're workin' for me it might look almost as if I done 'em."

"Well," drawled Hugh, "Mrs. Flanagan don't take time to think where she'll hit, but I'll ask her if you like."

"I believe," said Callahan, with exasperation—"I believe you want me to ask you to come and live with me."

Hugh colored: a slow, deep flush that was as painful to see as tears. Instinctively he made as if to leave the room. Then Callahan offered the first apology that had ever passed his lips.

"Hugh, I didn't mean that," he said. "I take it back.

I'm sorry. I really want you to come, and it was my last struggle before giving up my grand bachelor freedom."

Hugh said nothing, but his face was full of refusal.

"And 'tis the first time," reflected Callahan, "that it ever struck me you'd ought to be as respectful to childher as to men."

In some obscure way Hugh understood that it would be a kindness to Callahan to accept his offer. The bitterness died out of his little face, and he said, simply:

"I'll try not to be in your way, Mr. Callahan."

And that was how Hugh and Callahan began to bring each other up. Callahan went home, and getting the kitchen table between himself and Mrs. Haraghey, his housekeeper, he announced that Hugh MacDermott was coming to live with them. Mrs. Haraghey was a little wisp of a woman, slow of movement, sharp of tongue, and blue and innocent of eye. Up to that point she had swept Hugh out of her kitchen at the head of the broom, when he was active, and turned up her blunt nose at him for an omadhaun when he was quiet. Now she relaxed her thin, long lips in a delighted smile, and said:

"Sure, what else have I been afther these weeks. A child about the house 'll make a new man of you. John, avic, he'll be like a little sprig from the ould sod growin' up to remind us we can do something for Ireland yet. Besides, 'tis to mass reg'lar you'll have to go now to put a good example before him."

At first Callahan had no thought of parental responsibility beyond seeing that the boy should partially support himself by selling papers as well as by running errands, and should go to church. But one day he came upon a group of lit-

tle lads sniggering over an obscure picture done in chalk on the sidewalk. Callahan looked at the satyr-like grin on their faces with distaste, and wondered definitely who Hugh's companions were. And upon that he set himself to read the mind and soul of the child, and found them white. Callahan, used to the ugly world of his ward, almost took this as a sign of stupidity, until he saw that the child was not ignorant but innocent.

"I don't like to go with them boys," said Hugh, blushing, "'cause I don't like the way they talk. Anything I couldn't say before the school-teacher I don't want to listen to."

"Oh," said Callahan, with a remote flash of jealousy against the school-teacher, "I suppose she's the grand woman?"

"She is," replied Hugh, warmly.

"I'll have to be calling on her at the school," suggested Callahan.

"My, she'd be honored," said Hugh, with sincere flattery.

"But," went on Callahan, "you ought to play with the boys. You can't act like a gurrl."

"I do play baseball with them Saturday mornings, and no one can pitch like me, and they got to mind what I say, too."

"Well, if you are respected among them, I ask no more," said Callahan, relieved. He wanted no school-teacher making a mollycoddle of his boy.

A few days later he set out upon his visit to Hugh's teacher. School had just been dismissed, and among the hordes of children deflecting in all directions from the red-brick building he noticed a stationary crowd on a street corner. Cal-

lahan had all an Irishman's scent for a fight. He was upon the group before it could scatter, and in the midst of it he saw Hugh and a boy a little older fighting seriously if unscientifically.

"Sneak!" yelled a boy, "here's the boss!"

At the moment Hugh was sitting upon his opponent.

"Then he'll see fair play," he panted.

"Get up," said Callahan, regretfully; "you know I can't allow a scrap. What's it about?"

"Skinny pulled Mayme Broomer's hair till she hollered, and Hugh pasted him for it," volunteered a boy.

"I didn't," Skinny retorted.

"Well, go home, all of yez," said Callahan, righteously, convinced that Hugh was having the best of the fight. "Wash your face, Hugh, and go on off with your papers."

Callahan, pleased with his boy's spirit, strode into the red-brick building and inquired at the principal's office for Hugh's teacher. He was directed to a numbered room up-stairs, where he found a thin, earnest lady, a type of the serious, devoted class of people who labor to be parents and ministers as well as teachers to the little souls under their charge.

"Well, miss, I'm Callahan," said the boss, ducking his big black head, "and I've called to talk about Hugh MacDermott."

She looked at his shrewd, kindly face and smiled, her faded eyes taking on a sweet expression.

"You're going to bring Hugh up, Mr. Callahan, I hear," she said—"a great responsibility."

"He's no trouble so far," said Callahan. "Behave all right here?"

"He's very good as boys go," she said, "and he has a splendid mind. Has he told you he made two grades this year?"

"Didn't mention it," replied Callahan; "all the better. He can get out in the world so much quicker."

The teacher clasped her hands.

"Oh, Mr. Callahan, you aren't going to be like all the other parents in this terrible ward, and put the boy to work before he goes through high-school?"

"High-school?" said Callahan, vaguely.

He had supposed, of course, that Hugh would leave school when he had completed the work of the eighth grade.

"Too much schooling is no help to a boy," he offered. "I never could do more than read and write and figger, nor the alderman, either."

The teacher seized her chance.

"But nowadays no one can get on without education. No mayor is ever elected unless he's had a college education."

Callahan smiled quizzically.

"Think Hugh 'll rise to mayor?" he asked.

She compressed her lips solemnly.

"Mr. Callahan, I see him governor," she said. "He's the cleverest boy I've ever known. If you could see him at his work as I do—"

Callahan looked about the room at the fifty-two little seats, and the cool, green walls barred here and there by the afternoon sun, and hung with pictures of poets and statesmen, the chief place, of course, being given to Lincoln; and then and there his plan for the boy was born. He had always despised "silk-stocking politicians," but he would

make of Hugh a combination of the best qualities of the silk-stocking and his own people. Hugh should understand both, and use both for his own purposes. Callahan rose.

"All right; he can have all the education he'll take," he said.

He went away and promptly forgot her. But in after years she, too, used to boast that through her Hugh MacDermott had got his start, but while Callahan clipped the phrase at this point, she always added, "to the higher things in life." And the good woman found many a moment of comfort in the thought that in her little way she was a member of the choir invisible.

That night Callahan took a lamp and followed Hugh upstairs to the attic.

"I want to have a look at them books I see you reading," he explained.

Hugh skipped up the dark stairs with alacrity.

"They're grand," he replied. "I just wish you'd let me read them to you."

Callahan entered the sloping little room. It was clean, being washed out by Hugh himself early every Saturday morning. On the gaudy yellow walls hung white cardboard texts with black lettering—"Walk in Wisdom"; "Not Failure but Low Aim is Crime"; and "What Man Has Done Man Can Do."

Callahan grinned.

"The school-teacher gave them to you, I bet," he said. "'Walk in Wisdom'—that's all right; it 'll save you many a stumble." He glowed with fatherly benevolence as he continued; it was satisfying to bring up a child. "'Not Fail-

ure but Low Aim is Crime.' 'Crime'—that ain't the right word."

"Well, I've thought of that myself," confessed Hugh, sitting on his little camp bed. "Crime is what they can put you in jail for. But the man that wrote that was a poet, and he ought to know."

"Poets is just the ones that don't," said Callahan; "maybe he meant mistake. But still, failure ain't a mistake, exactly; it's downright incompetence. You aim high and see you don't fail, or you'll hear from me. Don't try to be a poet, either," he added, as an afterthought. "They're no good—dead, and this is the land of the living, as you'll find out when you grow up and learn what competition means. 'What Man Has Done Man Can Do,'" continued Callahan; "the second man meaning Hugh MacDermott, eh? And that's all right. And now," finished the censor, "tell me what all them books is about."

Callahan seated himself on the other end of the camp bed. The child's eyes grew dreamy as he answered:

"Oh, Mr. Callahan, such grand kings and knights and dragons, and ladies in *dis*tress, and noble deeds and pure, and bards that play before the kings in their halls, and grand scholars—"

"Ah, they used to have all of them in Ireland," said Callahan, "and plenty of Good Little People, too, and Leprechawns and pots of goold. But it's a pack of lies," he added, sternly; "they don't have them now. Don't you go to getting your head full of nonsense or you'll never be a practical man."

"Well, I suppose there ain't any dragons," conceded Hugh; "but wouldn't I just like to have a grand white

horse with silver harness! Then I'd ride down Halsted Street with a bag of gold hanging round my neck, and I'd throw handfuls to all the poor, and the little childher 'd never be hungry again. It's harder for the little ones, you know, Mr. Callahan. And I'd make that butcher that gives short weight hand out all his meat to the poor—"

"Oh, you would, would you?" said Callahan; "and him with such a stand-in with the council and the mayor!"

"Sure," pointed out Hugh; "don't you see I'd be a bigger man than any of them!"

"One-man power?" queried Callahan. "But don't you suppose them that helped you up to your job would be wanting something for themselves? Suppose that butcher had give you a leg up?"

Hugh considered. Like all children he accepted facts, but, unlike most, he had a keen sense of justice.

"Mr. Callahan," he said, "I don't see why a bad man should be left alone. What's bad is bad, ain't it?"

"Not always," said Callahan. "You're too little to understand."

"I must be," sighed Hugh. "In school they tell me how grand Washington was, and the alderman comes and makes a speech about following his example, and then it's all in the papers how the alderman gets money on contracts—"

"Don't you belave the papers," said Callahan, virtuously; "they've even had the face to accuse me. You just learn your lessons, and belave what they tell you in school, and when you're bigger I'll learn you how to compromise."

Hugh reached for his dictionary to get the meaning of the word, and Callahan took advantage of his silence to go down-stairs.

"I don't want him to learn what practical life really is too soon," he reflected. "He better get an understanding of Sunday-school precepts so he won't forget what noble sentiments is, annyway; and later on he can tache them to his boys for a while and to his gurrls always."

In his shabby sitting-room, worn with the passing of many heelers, he smoked a pipe in some perplexity.

"Well, *I* didn't make the world," he complained to his conscience. "I'd like the world to be different as well as the next one, so I would. I'll keep him innocent long's I can, and his fairy-books 'll help, and then I'll have done my part, annyway."

He smoked uneasily for a time. Then he sent for Mrs. Haraghey, and, in a new mood for him, told her with heavy moral indignation, unbroken by her interruptions, that she was not sufficiently clean; that she must wash the woodwork oftener, and order two dozen bath-towels, and see that a tub was prepared for Hugh every Saturday night until a real bath-room should be built in the house.

Callahan's first feeling of incompetence as to moral guidance rose a few weeks later, when Hugh came to him for advice.

"Mr. Callahan," he said, sitting on the ragged black hair-cloth sofa, "I want to ask you something."

Callahan assumed a judicial air and felt for his bag of raisins.

"Well, I'm listening," he said.

"This afternoon," said Hugh, "I got my papers delivered and sold early, and was coming home with my money, when I saw some of the kids going into the candy

store. Skinny had some money, and he was treating a lot of the little kids like Mayme Broomer to taffy."

"Well?"

"Well, he held up a heap of pennies, and says he to me: 'Look, kid; I bet you 'ain't ever seen that much cash.'"

Hugh paused and blushed.

"Well?"

"And then I took out all my money—it was an awful lot—and I said: 'A g'on; I got more here'n you ever saw, and Mr. Callahan 'll let me spend it if I want to. I could treat a crowd three times this size.'"

"Well?"

"And—and I 'ain't felt right about it, Mr. Callahan. Now, why is it that was wrong?"

"Sure, what was wrong about it?" asked Callahan. Then, as he saw the child's face, he added, hastily: "From wan point of view, that is, it was all right to let Skinny see you'd take nawthing off him. But from another point of view"—here Callahan sparred for time and ate a handful of raisins—"sure, you shouldn't have been so quick to show off. That's it; you shouldn't have been so struck with yourself."

Hugh considered, slowly brightening.

"I suppose that is it," he said.

Callahan wished to be on the safe side.

"There are other reasons, too," he said; "but you'll understand them when you are some older. You go on off up to bed, and don't show off. 'Tain't politic—I mean, 'tain't—'tain't honorable. Them kings and things in your books wouldn't do it."

"Yes," said Hugh, innocently, "I knew that, and that's why I came to ask you why they wouldn't do it."

Thereafter Callahan came to realize dimly that there were better ways of dealing with life than his own, other and finer issues. He elaborated his doctrine of compromise so that he would have it all ready when Hugh's hour of questioning came; and with no intention of altering the practical rules which he had found profitable, he pondered on some principle which might answer to an instinctively fine attitude toward people and things which the child was beginning to show. But he was unaware that little Hugh was doing his part to bring up Callahan.

II

FURLONG'S CONTRIBUTION

AS Hugh grew toward adolescence he retreated further from practical life and more and more into a world of dreams. Callahan's old theory had been that a boy should be made sharp, should be let try his teeth early on the rind of the world. He remembered only too well his own orphan childhood in the little, dust-swept streets of Kilmanan, in County Wexford, a poor little chap trying his very milk-teeth on an inhospitable substance. His lessons had been hard and profitable; he had read too soon the black side of the book of life.

But he had a far higher standard for Hugh than he had for himself. He wanted to keep the little soul white as long as possible, and at the same time he knew that such a practice would some day bring him under the sharp judgment of the soul he had guarded. Hugh's temperament assisted Callahan. More and more the boy brooded over his tales of knights and heroes. Mrs. Haraghey's railing at his wool-gathering wits fell on sealed ears. The dirty, worn streets along which he passed to the red-brick school became winding rivers or lanes of trees; so preoccupied was

he with the sweeping rows of elms, the bright crests of birds, the sheen of deer-skins, that he failed to read the life about him. He did not see the drunken men in the street or the sluttish women; he could not understand the meaning of open vice; and far less did he comprehend the machinery of corruption which went on in the very room over which he slept. He responded only to beauty.

Sometimes he found it without him. Sitting in the school-room, when he saw the red cheeks and opulent hair of little Mayme Broomer, he pictured her as a lady in prison for whom he would fight. When he looked up at the copy of the Wingless Victory, which stood in the corner near the teacher's desk, he remembered the beautiful lines of draperies and gowns which he had seen in the great windows of shops on State Street. He was never moved to throw his arms about the statue and kiss its lines as little Tony Carducci had done once; but when no one was looking he sometimes caressed them with a shy, loving hand.

To his school-teachers and companions who lived in the practical world he was just an ordinary boy. Like most boys he was a good deal of a clumsy St. Bernard puppy. When he passed a friend in the main hall of the school he generally gave him a thrust in the back; if he saw an opportunity he tripped up those who passed him in the aisles of the school-room. He spent a good many of his pennies on jam tarts, and looked forward to circus time as the squires of old to their white nights of vigil and the glory of sword and shield.

But always he lived in a land of his inner visions. When the arithmetic lesson was dull, or the grime on Tony's brown neck, bobbing in front of him, was too apparent, he

shut his eyes and saw rough fishers in northern seas sailing home with pearl treasures, and moonstone, sandal-wood, and shawls and bronze and jade. Sometimes, when he scrawled pictures in his books, with a cautious eye cocked up at his teacher, he was saying over to himself:

"And silken Samarcand—and—*seed* and Lebanon."

At night he occasionally dreamed of his heroes and ladies and forests, and by-and-by one particular dream took shape. He saw himself riding along a dreary road with a mirage of far woods behind him, and pale light on either side reflected in a dismal swamp which ate up to the edges of his path. Far away ahead of him gloomed an enchanted castle. There was a lady there whom he was to rescue. He did not know whether she was a king's daughter or the poor little sister to a page. He only knew that she was standing on the castle wall, one little hand shading her eyes, looking and looking for him to come. It was at long intervals that he dreamed it, but sometimes it slipped into his mind in the daytime, and then it was far keener than any other vision that came to him. He was a little ashamed of it because there was a lady in it; it would be more manly to rescue a whole village full of poor folk; but, despite embarrassment, he accepted it because it had come to him—like all his other impossible Celtic dreams—full of power and pity.

He knew a good many of Callahan's friends, but the only one who was at all real to him was Henry Furlong, a young lawyer. Hugh vaguely felt that he was different from the other men, but perhaps that was because Furlong had paid the child some attention, due to the young man's feudal sense. In County Wexford, Hugh's father had rented ten

acres from Furlong's father, who himself had a scant three hundred, but that was enough to induce the landlord sentiment. Hugh had shyly liked the smiling young gentleman who brought him books.

Furlong happened once to ask Callahan why he did not send the boy away to school. It was an idle question, but it took root in Callahan's mind. It was impossible to keep the boy asleep much longer to the life in the ward; he would soon begin to be influenced by the political methods about him. He should go to school, and then he should come back again and choose. It should be a military school, because whatever the boy decided to make of himself the habits of obedience and discipline would be good for him. Hugh protested, and Callahan's sore heart was comforted when he saw how his boy clung to him.

During the three years of military school Callahan kept the boy away from the ward, visiting him in his vacations and taking him over some bit of American travel which they had planned all year in their letters. The boy was growing strong and tall; his forehead was noble, and the deep Celtic eyes, still the dreamer's, could fire at the thought of the things to do in the world. Hugh spoke frankly to Callahan about his thoughts—but not about his dreams. Callahan saw that the boy was aware of sin and of conflict and corruption; sometimes he was troubled lest Hugh should connect them with him. But on the whole he felt secure, because his boy was still a theorist; he had had no real brush with life, and his high sense of honor had kept him from fully realizing the average level of men's motives and objects. Callahan was half angry when he thought of Hugh's inexperience, and contrasted him with a young

precinct captain not much older, who already had the scheme of city politics in the palm of his hand; and yet he was half proud, too, for at bottom every Irishman is something of an idealist, and Callahan felt vaguely that all men must have been like Hugh in the old days when Ireland was free.

And Hugh's dreams still went on, only now they were of what he might do for the world. It was all dim—somewhere there must be a way to carve, a deed to do. In the background was still a haze of forest and seas, and somewhere the lady with the slim hands. He thought of that old dream, still with shame, but now and then with a flash of shy delight. Women were beautiful. Some day, when he was old enough, of course, why should there not be some one for him—some one with a beautiful voice, who would wear robes with long lines like an old picture; some one with a soft weeping of hair, and with a round throat about which one could clasp a circlet of rubies in dark gold, and on whose delicate fingers one could slip rings of pearl and turquoise?

The dream came oftener after he was sent to a Michigan law school. He worked hard over his books, and in his relaxed hours fled to his dreams rather than to the companionship of other young men. They seemed to him to offer only tentative friendship, for he was bent on finishing his law course in Chicago, and where he was all the tenure of his life seemed temporary. So, though he read and thought, he learned little from men.

In his second year he began to take an interest in politics, reading the papers eagerly. A haunting distrust of the old ward machinery at home leaped into his mind, and yet

he was surprised to find that he knew nothing definitely about it. He loyally pushed the thought away, but it came again. He could best bury it by losing himself in his visions. In the spring of the year Callahan came up to see him, somehow disturbed at a reticence he felt in his boy's letters. When Hugh received the telegram summoning him to meet the train on which Callahan was to arrive, he felt a shamed reluctance. He wanted not to see his benefactor; he wanted to wait till the summer when he should have time to "think things out."

But one look into Callahan's big, generous face swept away his doubts. Like a school-boy he threw his arms about Callahan's neck.

"Oh, Uncle John," he cried, "you should never, never have sent me away from you, for there's nobody like you!"

Callahan's blue eyes grew misty, and he coughed deprecatingly.

"That's all right, Hugh—all right. I had a quare feeling—Sure. I remember now. My mother used to bend over and look at me for fear I'd die in the night—and me as husky a kid as you'd find, if the pitaties were few and far between. I'm a fool, Hugh; but nawthing could separate us two, eh?"

"Nothing in the world."

"Except a lady. When she comes your old Uncle John 'll take a back seat. Well, now, tell me everything."

Hugh's accounts of "everything" were general enough, but sufficient to convince Callahan that he had been brooding too much alone, had seen too little of other healthy young men. Callahan resolved to engineer his boy's entrance into society. He insisted on accompanying Hugh

to his classes, sitting with a gravely interested face under learned professors, at whom he shot quizzical glances now and then.

"If they know all that," thought Callahan, "in the name of the saints why don't they get out in the world and succeed?"

He had Hugh stop every young man who nodded to him, and made his acquaintance, and, reader of men that he was, picked out the freest spirit of all. Him in ten minutes he had bound to him with hoops of steel, and the two planned a great jamboree for Hugh's acquaintances—friends he had none.

"For," said Callahan, "young man, I'm going to introduce you to the land of the living."

Hugh stood aside, bewildered and admiring, and pleased at the way his Uncle John could handle men. There was a big dinner, at which Callahan told stories; by the third course he had won to himself and transferred vicariously to Hugh the allegiance of even the guests who had come for the sake of the dinner. Afterward there was a theatre-party, where the young men crowded the spare boxes and orchestra seats, and got up between acts and waved at each other to make sure none of them were lost, and threw flowers at a soubrette and begged the chief actor for a speech. Then followed supper, and in the very late hours they went homeward to dormitories and fraternity-houses, vying with each other for the honor of walking with Callahan.

It was an obvious way of winning the hearts of youth, no doubt, but it was done with kindly intent. Hugh was more definitely aware than ever of the genuine qualities of Callahan. Whatever lurking suspicion he might have of

Callahan's way of life, nothing could ever disturb his trust in the man's inherent goodness. Callahan was to be always his great rock in a desert land. Hugh got a new sense of the value of learning to win men, if one were to do any work, good or bad, in the world, and a certainty that the best way was to be a genuinely good-fellow. When the two parted, Callahan to go home with peace in his heart, Hugh to return to work with a host of friends, they locked hands with a renewed promise of loyalty in their eyes.

For a few weeks Hugh was very happy. He had found a new world, and his visions fled away for a time. It was good to be young, to go off with the "fellows," to waste hours in the aimless, happy way of the untried man, to talk over life with others, who, like himself, felt the power to share in and shape the great things of the world. Then, just a little before the end of the term, his joyous boyhood had an end.

It was announced that State Senator Furlong, of Illinois, his old acquaintance, was to give a lecture on municipal politics for the general body of students. Hugh remembered with a start that Furlong had long dropped out of Callahan's life. Now Hugh learned that he was making a good record for himself in the legislature of his State by his masterly manipulation of certain reform bills.

All unknowing what was before him, the youth went into the big lecture hall and took a seat well to the front. There on the platform, by the dean of the law school, sat Furlong, a little stouter than of old, and not so tall as Hugh had remembered him, dark, animated in expression and gesture. Hugh suddenly felt toward him as he had toward his old heroes of romance; here was a man with noble deeds for his

mark. He looked about him at the high, panelled walls, their spacing broken here and there by the portrait of some man who had done his little quota in the world's work. To the left and right of him were black and brown and blond heads of young men—all, like himself, full of the untested hopes of youth. Something in Hugh responded to all that bounding health and force; he felt a thrilling sense of power, a longing to have his hand on the lever of things in the world, to shape and be shaped among his brother men. Here, shoulder to shoulder with his friends, he would march his way through the land of the living, meeting enemies and sorrows if he must, but sure of doing his part in the work of the world. He would need to be an old man before he would know that there is nothing more noble and yet more pathetic than these same callow, untried enthusiasms of youth.

When Furlong rose the boy's heart went out to embrace him. Here was some one who had blazed his way, who would show young blunderers the path to tread. Furlong stepped forward with dignity, his face sober. He paused a moment till his audience was tense with attention; then he sent his deep voice vibrating through the room, and his strong, brown hands were moving in the gestures Hugh remembered.

Hugh's emotions were so strong that at first he heard Furlong's words only superficially. But soon, through his palpitating, glorified haze of feeling, a pang struck like a shaft of fire. Furlong was mentioning Callahan's name—now, now, in the hearing of a score of lads who knew Callahan; he was citing Callahan's ward as an illustration of corruption which deserved scathing denunciation. It was

the most vivid moment of Hugh's life. He listened with burning face and miserable eyes. He wanted to rise up and say:

"Stop! It's lies; he's a good man."

Then the masterly analysis went on until the facts, the details, names of persons he knew, gave to the whole an air of ghastly reality, and the kindly memories of his boyhood arose to bring conviction to his mind where they should have denied the charge.

When Furlong was again launched on abstract statement, Hugh heard no more of what he said. Again the youth went back and began to read, slowly, the experiences through which he had passed with eyes sealed. Had he known—had he not known that there was utter corruption in the ward? Had he not vaguely accepted it as a regrettable necessity of party politics? Countless incidents of which he had not then seen the significance confronted him, crying examples of dishonesty. And now he saw that of late he had been wilfully blind. He wanted to shut his ears, to shout: "If this is Callahan's way, it must be my way!" Something subconscious in him began to keep time with Furlong's emotional periods.

"'When we dead awake,'" quoted Furlong. "We must awake, and you young men are the ones in whose power it lies to make this a world of the morally living and not of the morally dead. You are untouched yet by the awful, subtle temptations of the machinery of success; you can refuse to compromise; you can forget your own personal gain, if you will, and insist on laws that will be fair to all men, on reforms that will make this country a place which you need not gloss over and explain to your children,

in which you can permit them to live without lies and shame."

The young audience had its ideals stirred. Hugh read that in the faces of his very friends who had loved and applauded Callahan. He, too, was stirred, in spite of his shame. After all, need he compromise, even for Callahan? Every man should live his own life; he might love Callahan as much as ever, even if he had to go his own way.

He was about to slip out after the lecture was over, when an usher hurried up to him and said that Furlong wished to speak to him. Hugh went forward, head bent; then he lifted his eyes defiantly. Furlong seemed suddenly very large and broad, a very solid physical presence. Hugh felt oppressed by the sharp glance of the bright blue eyes; he wanted to avoid the genial, out-stretched hand.

"I'd not forgotten you," Furlong said, shaking hands. "You've grown two feet, but nothing could change your eyes."

"I haven't forgotten you," Hugh said, with effort. "I used to watch for you Saturday nights; you used to come then."

"I did not see you in the audience till my speech was nearly finished," said Furlong. "I like Callahan to this day; no one could help it. But, as you know, our political ways are different."

Hugh blushed; Furlong misunderstood the cause.

"I try not to judge men harshly," he said, hastily. "Callahan was a good friend to me."

"He's the best man I know," said Hugh, hotly.

"Yes, yes; believe that. All the same, stick to law and keep out of ward politics. Come to see me sometimes."

He turned to others anxious to speak to him, and Hugh went away.

The first keen shock to an idealist is always hard to think of. It matters little how small the occasion is; the tragedy is always great. Hugh's glories were trailing in the dust. His day of care-free youth had gone down in defeat.

III

THE BOY CHOOSES

WHEN his examinations were over, Hugh went home. After his miserable weeks of unrest there was something fortifying in the sight of the little house, always painted now—for his sake, he knew. This home was something that could not change, surely. There was scant beauty in the half-dead trees of the little triangular park, small pleasure in the dusty sunlight, little comfort to be had in the sight of the slattern neighbors. But it all spoke the language of love and kindness to him, and now it stood for his one reality.

He had decided not to return to Michigan. For a day or two after his arrival he said nothing to Callahan, giving himself up entirely to the happiness the big boss felt in his return. But one night, when the first edge of his homecoming had worn off, he went into Callahan's untidy front room, growing more ragged with the years. Callahan was conservative about that room. He wanted it to stay just as it had been when he first stepped into it, barring a little necessary dusting. Hugh looked at the familiar pictures of "Wide Awake" and "Fast Asleep," cherubic children that had come in chromo shape from Ireland; at the ex-

tension-table with its green cover, the lamp placed on the central cluster of its shamrock pattern, because sometimes the side pieces fell down; at the hollowed chairs and the old hair-cloth sofa. He took his seat on the slippery end of this, remembering how he had sometimes liked to slide off it in his little-boy days.

Callahan felt something rather portentous in the air, but he said, with an assumption of indifference:

"Haven't started in your trick of going up-stairs to study yet?"

"No, Uncle John."

Callahan puffed at his pipe for a few minutes; the smoke rolled up over his crisp, black hair, beginning now to be touched with gray.

"Anything the matter?" he asked, at length.

Hugh eyed the big, burly figure with dismal affection.

"It's only that I've been thinking—"

Callahan essayed a time-worn joke; then, as he saw the effort poor Hugh had to make to receive it, he said, in a loving attempt to help his boy:

"Well, I suppose the time I have been expecting has come. Thank God it's not been sooner. You don't like my ways?"

The matter was almost too simple now. Hugh colored and fidgeted on the slippery sofa.

"I don't judge you, Uncle John," he hastened to say. "It's only—I suppose I've always expected to be of use to you in politics, and now—I can't."

"I see," said Callahan, not without a hint of bitterness. "Got any fault to find with other people's business methods—capitalists, for instance? Scorn the prospect of being a corporation lawyer yourself?"

'I don't mean you'll come round to my views in three weeks, but after two or three years you'll learn that you've got to compromise or you'll not count in the world—for yourself or any one else. But you'll learn it after you've worn yourself out living on nothing a week, and trying to pay law-school fees out of it, when you might as well take a bit off me now. Couldn't you take it and pay me back later?"

Hugh shook his head. He could not trust himself to speak, for the pleading in Callahan's tone was hard to bear, and he was wondering if, after all, he was not something of a fanatic, and even a little cruel.

"I'm sorry, Uncle John. I'm going to some law school in the city here and work my way through."

"Well," sighed Callahan, "I guess I know of a job would suit you while you're studying the law. Like a job as night clerk in a hotel? Or are you too high-principled to accept it from me?"

"Oh, Uncle John," said Hugh, with a choking laugh, "I'd as soon take what I could from you as give to you, and you know what that means."

"Man who owns the hotel is a great old thief," remarked Callahan. "I won't deceive you. He made his money in a pretty rotten way—too rotten for me."

"I know you can easily make me look ridiculous," said Hugh, flushing, "but the money I earn myself will be all right. I haven't been able to straighten out the moral affairs of the whole world yet, Uncle John."

"Of course you will live here still?" questioned Callahan. "There's lots you could do for me—that would be all right—"

His voice showed so much uncertainty that for the first

time Hugh realized fully what the break must mean to Callahan. He bowed his head on his foster-father's knotted hand and burst into tears. That was the end of his boyhood.

They talked long that night, Callahan explaining fully his theory of compromise and making excuses for his own point of view, Hugh weighing every word, and still holding fast to that one clear thread that he must do, day by day, what he felt to be right.

When he went to his room that night, the little room that he hoped would be his as long as Callahan lived, he took down the old texts that had hung on his wall for almost ten years, and put up two others which he had that day made with Gothic lettering. One read:

> "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
> These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
> Yet not for power (power of herself
> Would come uncalled for), but to live by law,
> Acting the law we live by without fear;
> And, because right is right, to follow right
> Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

The other motto read:

> "Time and I against all the world;
> Chance and I against time and you."

Hugh sat hugging his knees on the little bed and reading them.

"I wonder," he mused, with his crooked smile, "whether

Uncle John wouldn't agree that one of those suggests some sort of compromise."

During the next two years, if Hugh did not know hunger, he did know hard work and deprivation. Mrs. Haraghey did her best to upset his determination. She coaxed, telling him that he would be long sorry to go against the wishes of such a grand man as John Callahan; she threatened, saying that he would break down and become an idiot in the brain of him, and cost Callahan a pretty penny forever. And, failing in both, she took to slipping silver change in his various pockets, thus pushing further into the future the day of starvation.

He knew hours of painful study, and other hours of perplexed thinking when he was groping for an articulate solution of his life. He saw now, and understood with a man's mind, the vice and folly and sin in the ward and in the big city, and the idealist in him shrank from it. As in his first days in law school, he kept away from the people in the ward, and after his first appearance of reserve no one tried to win his friendship except little Mayme Broomer, early in long dresses, and eager for a "beau." When he felt his old powerlessness in the maze he sometimes lost himself in hard physical exercise, and sometimes he relaxed and dreamed.

Occasionally the dreams were vainglorious. He would pass a well-dressed, silk-hatted gentleman, and would think, "Some day I shall be a judge." But often the dreams were of the sweet impossible sort of his boyhood, when he used to believe that knights did really have chances to right wrongs. His dim dream of himself riding to the lady on the castle wall came back, and he thought of her wonder-

ingly, with her soft hair and lovely eyes, and the jewels he should put on her slim neck and fingers. Gradually she came to have a shadowy face, a loving and wise smile. There were times when she was a real person to him, and he stretched out his arms to her, and then drew them back confusedly.

The spring that Hugh graduated Callahan fell ill, and the result of that led to the second great turning-point in Hugh's life. Callahan was long and slow and restless in convalescence, and eager for travel.

"I'm not well yet," he said, as the two sat side by side one day on the slippery sofa, "and I've seen healthier-looking ones than you. Now, the doctor do be saying I need a change; but I'm too tired yet to look after myself. And will you go with me, Hugh, and take care of us both?"

"Of course, Uncle John."

"Ah, but it 'll take more than a week or two, and you'll not guess where to."

"Yellowstone Park?" hazarded Hugh.

"No, nor to the Adirondacks, nor to Newport, either," said Callahan. "Where but to County Wexford, no less."

Hugh closed his eyes. In his dreams he sometimes saw the green, green land which had been his cradle, and whose songs had crooned him to sleep, and whose old, old stories had given him the stuff of which his visions were woven.

"But that's a dream," he murmured.

"'Tis not, then," said Callahan. "Hugh, I've been thinking what should I pay for the compromise I've made with—with things. Well, I've laid a good bit of money by. Some will be for you when I'm gone, if you'll take it; if not, may-

be your wife 'll have more sense. But with the rest—well, I want to buy a little comfort for them at home."

"In Ireland, you mean? Have you relatives there?"

"Sure—some; but I was thinking of the whole village. You think people are bad off here. I wish you could see that Irish village I was borrn in; then you'd know what poverty was made of. I'm going back to see can I buy that village."

"But, Uncle John," cried Hugh, "how can you? Where's the Irish landlord that 'd sell?"

"My wits is not wool-gathering," said Callahan; "don't you suppose I've kept thrack of things at home? Now, Kilmanan Castle and the village belongs to the old Mr. Carew, an old man when I left Wexford thirty years ago. His wife died this year, I hear; his son is dead this ten years, and the son's wife, and there is left but two granddaughters, the eldest to inherit the property, and it's mortgaged up to the hilt."

Hugh drew a long breath.

"To own an Irish village!" he cried. "Uncle John it's nothing in America, but in Ireland! And what it would mean to the poor people!"

"Aha!" said Callahan, complacently; "and an Irish peasant to own it, too! The Carews have had it since Queen Elizabeth of cursed memory put down some honest Irish and let in the Carews and the Furlongs and such. 'Twould be but right that the Callahans and MacDermotts should have their own—them that owned the soil before Englishmen was heard of."

"But what makes you think he'll sell?" asked Hugh.

"I don't know it," replied Callahan, "but 'twill do no

harrm to find out, I suppose? He may refuse us, and yet give in next year. Hugh, I see myself walking up to the castle and being asked into the big hall—no, the drawing-room; I never was inside it in my life."

"'Rah for America!" said Hugh. "Uncle John, you'll walk in as though it were O'Grady's saloon, and stick your hat on a statuette in the corner."

"No, no," said Callahan, simply; "I'll treat Mr. Carew as an equal. I have risen in the world, and he have not—"

"But you'll overlook it. Maybe we'll be asked to dine," suggested Hugh, wickedly.

"I belave," said Callahan, with effort—"I belave we'd better buy a dress-coat each. Yes?"

Hugh roared with laughter.

"Uncle John, I'd not miss it for anything."

"You'll come?" asked Callahan.

"I will indeed."

"Sure, I didn't know that your strict virtue would permit, even though you were going as nurse to a sick man."

"But you need me," said Hugh, smiling; "and, besides, Furlong will not have a vacancy for me till the autumn—if he does then."

"Furlong's going over himself, I hear," said Callahan. "His father's dead, and though his oldest brother has the place, he wants to go back and brood over the ancestral acres and give his family some American pointers. Begor, Hugh, it makes a man see pictures, just to think of Ireland—if you have a little money to take back!"

They sat in silence, both dreaming, but none of Hugh's visions were near reality.

IV

THE LADY ON THE WALL

N Irish castle—it may mean anything from a two-roomed tower to a great graystone pile more commodious than any American mansion of a multi-millionaire. But starveling or wealthy, Irish castles are strangely living. Race after race has battled and died for the gray old stones, laughter and sighs of noble and peasant alike, old songs of old bards have echoed in the sloping halls, the enduring emotion of a baffled but unconquerable nation has been caught into the very walls, so that they are no longer dead, but can give forth to the ears gifted to hear a voiceless record of thwarted hopes and brave deaths, gallant loves and inconspicuous, unrewarded service.

Kilmanan Castle was decorously crumbling. Old Mr. Carew had shut up the left wing twenty years before; ten years before he had closed the chapel. Now he and his granddaughters were living in half a dozen rooms in the main part.

"And six thousand pounds would restore it," Mr. Carew would think. "Only six thousand pounds of all the money in the world."

The usual high stone walls enclosed the castle; within was a neglected park with an avenue of magnificent trees

bending over a moss-grown and stony road leading to the massive front of the building. At one side was a large, walled garden, and here, on the morning after Callahan and Hugh landed at Queenstown, Moira Carew, the elder granddaughter, knelt at work.

It was no delicate nurturing of flowers that engaged her. She was toiling like any peasant over a patch of greenish-blue cabbages. She wore a black print gown with a band of white at the neck and sleeves; it might easily have been a kitchen-maid's uniform. But when she stood upright and moved a step or two before bending again, she showed a bearing and a walk that could belong only to one with the dower of race. She was scarcely sixteen, but already she had the mature expression of one weighted with burdens beyond her years. In the narrow picture-gallery of the castle there were a dozen portraits with the same pale-brown hair, straight, level, black brows, and serene, small mouth. But while they showed quiet English blue eyes, some forgotten Irish ancestor must have given Moira her questioning hazel eyes. Already she knew that there was a hunger in them. It had been expressed by her grandmother and her sister Ida in the remark: "Moira, dear, do you know you are staring?" The term covered a multitude of expressions, and Moira tried to veil them all by dropping her eyelids when she was moved.

She was working over the third row of cabbages, when a young girl came into the kitchen garden and called to her. She was a very pretty creature with Saxon hair and eyes, and a delicate way of poising her body and lifting her head.

"Are you coming to help me, Ida?" Moira asked, with a quizzical smile.

"Not I; I am reading to grandpapa. The mail has just come, and a messenger from Wexford with such a funny letter."

She smiled down at Moira among the cabbages, and continued:

"It is from some one who signs himself 'Henry Furlong,' and who has been living in America for fifteen years. He talks about brother landlords, and that sort of thing, and he wants to call on grandpapa. He belongs to the Furlongs at Helytown."

"They are freeholders, aren't they?" Moira said.

"Perhaps, but they live like peasants. It isn't that he wants to come, though; it's the letter, Moira—such grandiose old-fashioned phraseology. You'd think he supposed grandpapa was a contemporary of Mr. Furlong's own George Washington."

"Has grandpapa answered?"

"He's going to write to him to come, and he wants to know if you would care to have him to tea."

"Oh yes," Moira said, her great eyes eager. "I should like to talk to an American."

"The boy who brought the letter told Kathleen that a horde of Americans reached Queenstown yesterday, and a lot of them came on to Wexford."

"And the shop-keepers have put up the price of the lace in the windows?" asked Moira, smiling.

Ida looked at her worn lace collar and sighed.

"Wouldn't it be jolly to buy things and knock them about as Americans do, and never think of having to mend lace or gloves?" she said.

Moira made no reply, and Ida added:

"There's another letter that rather worried grandpapa—from some one named John Callahan, who says he will call this morning on business. I'm afraid grandpapa thinks it may have something to do with papa's old debts—"

Moira sighed.

"Do run back and take his mind from it," she urged. "I can't leave yet; I have a lot to do in the orchard. The path is getting quite grassy, too. I must work at that presently."

She rose and unlocked the gate that led to the orchard. She mounted a ladder propped against the wall next a pear-tree and began pruning the branches. As she worked she commanded the avenue, and presently she saw two figures enter the park gate and come slowly toward the castle. As they approached Moira saw that the older was a middle-aged, black-haired, burly man who stopped occasionally to wipe his brow. The other was younger, a neat, gray figure swinging along with evident enjoyment.

"Father and son?" wondered Moira. "No. Uncle and nephew? Possibly. Newly wealthy man and secretary? Probably."

When they were a few rods from the castle the older man stopped, and Moira heard the younger say, with laughter: "Don't you remember, Uncle John, you were going to be kind to the poor man?"

"That's all very well, Hugh, but there's no telling how one of the aristocracy 'll take a proposed favor."

"The real truth is, you're meaching. Brace up! Remember, an American is as good as a king, when not better. I'm going to walk in the park while you are granted an audience."

Callahan drew a long breath and ascended the steps of the castle, while Hugh strolled a few paces down the avenue. Soon he skirted across a corner of lawn and reached the orchard wall. Moira saw that he passed his hand with a kind of reverence over the rough old stones. She smiled at that, and was about to go back to her work of snipping twigs when he looked up and saw her.

It must have been a full minute that Hugh stared at the lady of his dreams. What matter that she had never before come to him so definitely, that he had never before known that her hair was pale brown and her eyes hazel, that he had never realized that she was to be found in the flesh? It was the same gentle face with the asking, perplexed eyes and the wise mouth which had crowned his most wistful visions.

When he saw the color mount in her face, Hugh blushed, too.

"I beg your pardon," he said, and was about to turn away when she gave a little cry, and he realized that she had missed her footing.

"I'm so sorry," she said, "but the ladder has fallen, and I'm hanging by my blouse. There's glass beneath. Will you call some one?"

The wall was ten feet high, and Hugh was agile. In a few minutes he had put the step-ladder under her feet and was clumsily extricating a rusted hook that had caught in the folds of her dress.

"It's lucky that goods is so strong," he said, as he watched her dismount. He dared not help her; he wondered how he dared speak to her.

"It might have been a nasty fall," she said. "Thank you."

"It was my fault," said Hugh, "but you looked like—I didn't at all expect to see you there. I had just left Mr. Callahan."

"Oh," she said; "that was Mr. Callahan? He wrote that he was coming on business." She hesitated, and then burningly let the question escape her. "Has the business anything to do with my father's affairs?"

He divined that she was distressed, and he wanted to prolong the dream of talking to her.

"It's a business proposition—a queer one, you will think. Mr. Callahan wants to buy Kilmanan village."

"Buy the village? How extraordinary!" she said.

Hugh revealed some of Callahan's reasons; at the moment he would have poured out any one's most private affairs. She listened with downcast eyes, and when he had finished she said, slowly:

"Mr. Carew won't consent, of course, but it's not a bad idea. When the estate comes to me—then, perhaps—"

She was rather decided, he thought, for a young girl. Her eyes, too, seemed very much as if she were dismissing him, and she had said "Mr. Carew" when she might have said "grandfather." But suddenly her look changed, and she spoke as if to an equal.

"You are from America?"

"Yes."

"I have never met an American before, though one is to call on my grandfather this afternoon."

"I know," said Hugh, with school-boy eagerness. "He told us he expected to: Mr. Furlong. He's a friend of mine—that is, I'm a friend of his. He's the finest fellow, and the cleverest politician—"

"Oh, he is in politics?" asked Moira, with interest.

"Do you understand about politics?" he asked. Anything, anything, just to keep her talking.

Moira smiled; there was sweetness and sadness and bitterness in the smile. Her grandmother had been a gentlewoman of a school that was dying out even in the middle Victorian age. She had counted on good marriages for her granddaughters; she had kept her designs delicately sheltered even from herself, but she had educated her clever Moira carefully, and had seen that her pretty Ida fostered her beauty. Moira, Mrs. Carew assumed, would marry into the political set, and be a power there, as a clever woman might; and so Moira had been trained in politics.

A mist rose to the girl's eyes, and she looked downward. When she spoke it was with a curiously friendly feeling for Hugh.

"Won't you tell me about America?" she asked. "There is a seat here."

She led the way through a long hedge of apple-trees to a bench by a sundial in the centre of the orchard. Hugh had never seen apple-trees trained to stretch out their branches like long wings and humble their height to four feet, nor had he ever seen peach and plum trees flattened against the wall, each spending its strength in producing a dozen or two specimens of fruit. As he looked at Moira he wondered if that method of selection, though undemocratic, were not the best for the world, after all. Only a scant score of people could be satisfied with the product of the whole orchard of Kilmanan Castle, but think of the quality of their satisfaction! He felt more at ease when he sat beside her.

"It's a very old place," she said, following his eyes. "I was reading in my great-grandmother's diary this morning a description of the yew-tree walk—its height, you know. It can't have grown more than three or four inches since she wrote, and you see how tall it is."

Suddenly Hugh's life at home felt very far away. He had a vision of State Street at noon—the hordes of people pouring out of offices, hurrying into restaurants, talking with nervous gestures, showing strained, lined faces, wearing themselves out for petty, ant-hill aims that loomed to them like mountain peaks; and here life went on so slowly that a lifetime measured an inch or two of yew-tree hedge.

"It's all very wonderful here," he said, lamely; "we have nothing like this at home."

"I've read some American novels," she remarked. "Women seem very free in the States, even the young ones."

She spoke questioningly.

"Oh yes; that's a platitude about us. The environment makes them what they are, of course, but it would be better for them all if they could live—like this. Take it all in all, they would find more freedom in the best sense here." He waved his hand comprehensively about the orchard.

Moira looked at him intently. For a moment she was about to lead the talk back to the garden, then to the weather in general, and thence to a gentle dismissal of the youth. But she was feverishly eager to know some facts about America; she was willing to make the talk personal to gain her point.

"Is there any work there that—that I could do, for example?" she asked. "I don't mean now—but later."

"You," he asked, "would leave this lovely place?"

Suddenly Moira flamed with feeling.

"Are American ladies ever hungry?" she cried. "I have gone to bed hungry many a night, as my grandmother did before me. You speak of freedom here. My path was marked out for me years before I was born. I'm not free to choose either duties or pleasures. I'm not so free as the peasant girls you passed in the cottages coming up here."

She paused; she was making confidences to quite an ordinary young man whom she had never met before.

"Even the young men here aren't free as we are in America," said Hugh, hastily. "At home you can rise 'no end,' as you Britishers say, but, of course, the better you start the farther you go. I suppose any one with your training could get work as a teacher, or perhaps as a companion; or there's work to do at translating. That's very nice, for one doesn't have to come in contact with people if one doesn't want to."

Really, this ordinary young man was making it very easy for her. Moira erased the adjective, and as a reward she made him further confidences.

"I am really quite a useful person," she said. "I am a good gardener, and I sew and embroider very well, and I can keep house, of course."

If she would just come over and teach them all to be like her, thought Hugh. And she had been hungry, and her little hands had dug beets and cabbages. The lady of his dreams had never known sorrow or care, but neither had she been flesh and blood. She had been serene, superhuman, incapable of the gust of passion which had escaped

the human creature at his side. He was happy and tortured, both, to find her human; her body had brought her nearer, and yet put her so far away. And through all his tremulous thinking there shot the realization that, after all, she was only a little girl scarcely sixteen.

She asked about Callahan, and he told her of the boss and of ward politics, and of Furlong's politics, and of his own life; so that he had been making the confidences, and her serenity had returned by the time a little faint tinkle warned him that the luncheon-bell was ringing.

He sprang to his feet in horror.

"Uncle John must have thought I'd gone back," he exclaimed. "How could I forget the time!"

She rose, and he stood staring at her with the miserable realization that the end of things had come. She was dismissing him; he would never see her again.

"How do I get out?" he said, dolefully.

"There's a door at the back of the orchard," she replied, leading the way. They walked in silence, rather slowly, though it seemed to him that the ground flew beneath their feet. When she unlocked the little wooden gate in the stone wall, she did so lingeringly.

"You were very good to tell me so much," she said; "and I'm glad to have Mr. Callahan's address. He may own Kilmanan yet."

"And you—I wonder if you will really ever come to America?" he said, wistfully.

"Perhaps; it's a dream, of course."

He knew how wild dreams could be.

She considered, and then held out her hand.

"Good-bye, Mr. ——"

"MacDermott. Good-bye."

He made a mighty effort and turned his back, and Moira closed the gate. He walked slowly down the avenue, a curious emptiness in his heart, while the girl, forgetting him, hurried back through the orchard. Mr. Carew was not accustomed to have her keep him waiting.

In the afternoon Ida rode away to call on a cousin, and Moira busied herself with housekeeping duties until she heard the sound of a carriage on the avenue. Then she hurried out to the rose-garden, where tea was to be served. Presently the old man-of-all-work, dressed in the one decent suit remaining of the Carew livery, shuffled down the centre walk, followed by a caller.

He was a fairly tall man, just taking on stoutness, with a pale, smooth-shaven face, keen blue eyes, and a ready smile. He was a little too carefully dressed, Moira thought, and as he advanced toward her he showed a little too much manner.

"Mr. Furlong?" she questioned, in answer to his bow. "I'm so sorry that my grandfather is ill this afternoon. He has just dropped into a sleep."

Furlong's face showed his disappointment.

"I'm sorry to hear that," he replied.

"Won't you sit down," she asked, "and let me give you some tea? Malachy, ask Kathleen to bring the tea here."

In the centre of the rose-garden was a pretty little summer-house containing rustic furniture. The view disclosed vista after vista of paths banked with glowing roses. Furlong liked flowers.

"What a blaze of color!" he said. "We can't get roses to grow like this in America."

"We have spent three or four centuries learning how," she said, "and the roses have the habit."

He had a very attractive face, Moira decided. His eyes lighted, and a little sly dimple came in his cheek. He looked like a man of power, too; his voice was deep and resolute, and his glance sped from spot to spot in a competent, all-seeing way.

"I'd almost forgotten how beautiful things are here," he went on. "I shall have some pictures to keep when I go back."

"You are only here on a visit, then?" she asked. "So many Irish who go away live only to come back."

"It depends on the Irish," he replied. "America gets a hold on one. Oh yes, I'm going back after I've been to England. There's not enough going on here, you know."

"I suppose not," Moira said.

Furlong watched the maid's progress with the tea-tray down a path of crimson roses, and then remarked, with his sudden, attractive smile:

"All the same, there's something very pleasant about actually sitting down in a garden and waiting for tea."

As Moira took her place at the rustic table, he added, to himself:

"And you do the honors very gracefully, little lady."

"I suppose one has no time for tea in America," Moira said, as she arranged the cups. "Sugar? Cream? I am told Americans like lemon."

"Yes, but I was brought up here, you know."

He took his cup and looked at her contentedly. Then

his eyes passed to Ida coming down the path in a riding-habit. The long robe made her look older, and its severe lines emphasized the early maturity of her figure. Moira dropped her eyes to conceal her look of pride. No portrait in the gallery of the castle could show such beauty as Ida's.

"My sister, Mr. Furlong," she said.

Furlong rose impressively.

"So delighted," he said. "I am very fortunate, in spite of the fact that Mr. Carew is indisposed."

Democrat as he supposed himself to be, he really felt a sort of exaltation in drinking tea with these gentry, and his language was taking on a slight flavor of his best oratory.

"I know my grandfather will hope to see you if you are staying here long," said Moira, gravely, as she gave tea to Ida.

"Mr. Carew rather enjoys meeting strangers," said Ida, in her slow, sweet tones.

Furlong smiled ambiguously.

"Mr. Furlong used to live here, you know, Ida," Moira reminded her. "I dare say as a boy grandpapa knew him."

"I'm afraid the acquaintance was slight," said Furlong. "I really am a stranger, but I am going about to renew all the old acquaintanceships I can. I like to meet people, Miss Carew."

"It must be very interesting," murmured Ida.

"It's part of a politician's profession," Furlong said—"in our country, that is."

"You know our candidates are supposed to kiss the babies at election-time," Moira said.

"Ah, but only once. In America we keep up our ac-

quaintance with all sorts of people, and I like it; it's democratic."

"I should like it, too," Moira said.

Furlong talked a little longer, and then rose reluctantly.

"It's been a very pleasant afternoon for me," he said. "I sha'n't forget it. Good-afternoon, ladies; you see, I won't say good-bye."

"Good-afternoon—ladies," mimicked Ida, when his footsteps on the gravel were dying away. "Is that the way they say it in America?"

"He's very nice, I think," Moira replied.

"I wonder if an American can sit still," questioned Ida. "He wiggled all the time. I really thought he was looking for one of those Yankee rocking-chairs. And he kept staring at things—I mean, showing he was staring."

"I liked his admiring it all so much," Moira defended.

"Never mind him; I want to tell you of the serious confidence Cousin Frances made me this afternoon."

"Isn't she always serious?"

"Yes, but this was ultra. She was talking about us instead of herself. It seems that the cousins and aunts have been holding a conference over us. Moira, did you ever know any one to have as many relatives as we have?"

"You mean—did any one ever have so many relatives anxious to interfere, and all with different ideas!"

"Quite so." Ida leaned back in her chair and lightly flicked her riding-whip. "Only now, miraculously, they've agreed. Cousin Frances told me plumply that grandmamma's views were old-fashioned."

Moira compressed her lips.

"Cousin Frances," went on Ida, bluntly, "says that there

are hundreds of well-born and pretty girls in London, poor like ourselves, who are trying to marry well. She intimated that when the place comes into your hands you must rent, and then you and I must go to India to Cousin Rose—"

"To India!" Moira put down her cup sharply.

"Don't you see," said Ida, softly, "there aren't so many pretty girls there, and there are plenty of unattached men, poor, for the most part, to be sure, but, as Cousin Frances said—she was quite frank—we really ought to be glad to get married at all."

Moira's face was crimson.

"It's dreadful—dreadful to have them talking about us this way."

"Oh, I don't see why she shouldn't plump out the truth," returned Ida. "You know very well all girls expect to marry—"

"But, Ida dear, one doesn't talk about it."

"I suppose it's no worse to wiggle about like an American than to talk about such things," said Ida, gloomily. "If only we were rich we needn't, and whatever happened to us in that way would come naturally."

"Don't let us think about it."

"But I'm awfully tired of just nothing happening," said Ida. "Don't you ever have that feeling, Moira?"

Moira's rebellion was much keener than that of easy-going Ida. She only shook her head, and repeated:

"Don't let us think about it. Let us be happy together and pray for grandpapa to live for years and years. Oh, if only they would let us alone!"

"More tea, Moira," said Ida, whose emotions were easily

spent; "and then I'll show you a lovely new blouse Cousin Frances gave me."

Moira smiled at her, but she was thinking of the two Americans she had met. Mr. Furlong she would doubtless see again, though probably not the other young man—MacDermott his name was. He had spoken of himself as a free-lance in the dark, great city where he lived. Both men seemed happy; they had got on in a self-respecting way. It seemed that nowadays one must get on; just living was not enough.

She put her elbows on the table and rested her chin on her hands. She, too, had her dreams. She wanted enough of her own to wear—not clothes from Cousin Frances; she wanted to meet likable people and to know things, to live a free life. And all this was not to come from a marriage planned by other people; it was not to come passively. She wanted to go out in the world and choose. In no other way could she get her share, whatever it might be, in the land of the living. But when old Malachy came to tell her that Mr. Carew was awake and wanted her, she rose to her duty with a smile at herself.

"What nonsense—all these vague plans!" she thought. "Nothing will ever happen; nothing can."

And at the same moment Hugh MacDermott, walking up and down the road that passed the castle wall, wondered if his strength were enough to bring them together once more. Would he ever see her eyes again?

V

THE LADY OF DREAMS

THE hum of life in the high office building was dwindling; only three elevators were running, and the hallway of the fifth floor quite echoed to the footsteps of a tall young woman of full figure who walked rapidly to the door on which were written the names of Henry Furlong and Hugh MacDermott, attorneys-at-law. She pushed her way decidedly in, ignored the young girl at the type-writer, who looked questioningly at her, and inquired of the office boy:

"Mr. MacDermott gone yet?"

"Nope."

The young woman tapped, rather in the manner of a proprietor, at the door of a little den to the left of the room, and then entered.

The late afternoon sun was striking across Hugh MacDermott's black hair, giving it a purplish sheen. Glancing up from the desk over which he was bowed, he showed a tired face. His thirtieth year neither gave nor promised him opulence of line or flesh; he looked rather thin and anxious. The wistful, twisted smile had lost something of its boyish expectancy; the Celtic eyes were a little keener, perhaps,

but in their depths they still showed the dreamer, the idealist.

"Hello, Hugh," said his visitor; "didn't expect to see me, I'll bet."

She had a big, good-natured smile, a bit too obvious, but not unattractive; her black, rather prominent eyes flashed a look that was perhaps too direct; it almost poked its way inward. One remembered, under her inspection, that one had arms and legs and ate three meals a day. Her hair was done in a pompadour too large, and occasionally, as she talked, she swept it with her side-combs. But she was a healthy, likable person whose animal spirits seemed to infuse a little of themselves into whomsoever might be her companion. Callahan called her "Elixir for tired people."

"Why, no, I was not expecting you, Mayme," he replied; "since you were to see me at dinner, I supposed you could wait till then." He closed his desk and smiled at her.

"Well, am I to see you at dinner, that's the question? Mrs. Harker asked me this morning, 'Is that young man coming to my boarding-house, or ain't he?' And I says, 'Well, there's his things; you can levy on them.' I told her you had to live nominally on the West Side 'count of being a representative, and only expected to be with us half a week or so to get a little fresh air. But she wants to see you settled with her first; she's been done before. I thought maybe Mrs. Haraghey wouldn't let you off."

MacDermott put some letters in his pocket as she spoke.

"Here's one from Uncle John," he said; "I've not had time to read it all day."

"Say, ain't it—isn't it queer, his wanting to stay on in

that dirty old Irish village? He'll lose his grip on things in the ward if he don't watch out."

"Oh no, he won't; trust Uncle John for that," said MacDermott. He got his hat and overcoat from the closet. "I'll go home with you now, if you like."

"Say," she said, as they left the office, "you know the Irish in the ward are awful set up that Callahan's been able to buy that village. First time in history, they say. Shouldn't wonder if he makes by it, after all—if he don't stay over too long, that is."

"It's been his dream for years," MacDermott said, as they stepped into the street.

"My, I wish we could walk home!" said the girl, moving vigorously beside him. "Gee, it's good to be in the open!"

She drew in long breaths; her generous figure seemed giving to the air. The six-o'clock rush always exhilarated her. She liked to take her swinging, even way across a crowded street, while other women and men dodged and hurried. It gave her a sense of power to see others running with strained, set faces to catch trains and cars, while she strode on in unhurried ease. She felt far above all these people, impersonal, like the yellow lights or the deep-blue sky.

She glanced at MacDermott pacing nervously beside her.

"Say," she said, "you look awful tired. It's about time you came to live on the South Side. The air in that awful ward is rotten, just rotten. Besides, you've been working too hard. Furlong knew what he was about when he took you in to do his hard work."

"Nonsense, Mayme," he said, as they entered the stuffy

red building that led to the suburban trains. "I don't work harder than any one else."

She sniffed; then she looked at him affectionately.

"You're an awful fool," she said; "if you like any one you just lay down for them to walk all over you."

"Nonsense, Mayme," he repeated, as they entered the train. "There, we've started, and I'm glad of it, for I'm hungry."

"You won't get a bite till six-thirty," she said; "and say, don't let the folks hear you call me 'Mayme.' "

"I don't think I shall forget to say 'Miss Broomer' before people," he replied.

"Oh, stuff! I mean—why, you know, I spell it 'Marie' now. 'Mayme' is so common. It just makes me sick when I go back to the ward to see my aunt to have every Tom, Dick, and Harry hollering out of the window, 'Hello, Mayme!' "

"You'll never really be ashamed of the ward," he said.

"Oh, won't I, though! It don't pay to boast of your humble surroundings till you're a great man, and I'll never be that. But one thing: no one ever thinks I got anything to hide. I talk so much and so frank that no one ever thinks of asking me about myself. So what I want to keep, I keep."

He smiled at her good-natured laugh.

"That's an astute policy, Mayme."

She smiled back at him.

"I hope young Dickie Ames won't favor the table with an account of my rise from the mire," went on Mayme.

"Ames! Is he there?"

"Didn't he tell you? He came yesterday. Said he

couldn't lose such a good chance of tagging after you. I must say I don't see why you should have to bring him up by the hand, even if you are one of his legal guardians. You admire Furlong; he admires you; lovely arrangement."

"He's a nice lad. Evidently I sha'n't suffer from lack of society."

MacDermott's face did not show unalloyed pleasure in his prospects.

"Well, anyway, I'm glad you're coming to a place fit to live in. I feel real complimented that you took the boarding-place on my say-so, and sent your things along."

"You are as good a judge of food as any man I know," he said.

"Well, I hope so," she returned. "And the people are awful nice. School-teachers and book-keepers and people like that. No shop-girls or such, of course. Guess I'm about the only stenographer. There's a university teacher at our table. My! we hate to have him, he's so cranky, but he sort of gives tone to us."

MacDermott laughed. He was beginning to feel the tonic of the girl's spirits.

"And a teacher in a girl's private school. Miss Tower's her name. My, she's the limit! she's so solemn, and always talking about duty, and sort of shivers when people tell jokes."

"Who else?"

"Oh, two or three fellows, and my friend Miss Gunn, and—oh yes, they put in a new person yesterday: Miss Crow, or something. No style to her a bit, but what makes us girls tired is she kind of talks French to a woman at the

hotel who don't think she's good enough to board with her, and so puts her off on us. Miss Gunn says she's only a ladies' maid, and if she is that makes the place look cheap. Say, there's two or three awful nice little parlors—"

"Here we are," said Hugh, as the train stopped with a jerk.

They emerged with a group of people upon the long suburban platform. The early twilight of spring had come; there was something soothing in the soft air. The streets were not crowded as in the down-town district, and there was a pleasant, home-going feeling about the quickly walking people.

"The air *is* better," Hugh said. "Do you know, I think I'm going to like it out here. I have a queer presentiment that I am."

"You better, when I chose it for you, mister," she said, briskly. "Here we are; down Washington Avenue."

She led him into a tall, four-storied building.

"Two houses together," she explained. "She cut the doors through. There's double staircases, and it can be confusing at midnight."

She led him into a little office and introduced him to Mrs. Harker, the keeper of the boarding-house—a small, thin, business-like woman.

"Mr. MacDermott, I pre-sume?" said Mrs. Harker, shaking his hand. "Say, Miss Broomer, won't you show him the way to his room? I'm busy. She knows where it is," she called after the two, coyly; "she was in there this morning to see if I'd fixed it up right."

MacDermott looked annoyed. Miss Broomer, not glancing at him, said, in a low tone:

"'Course I couldn't trust her arrangement. But say, I was sorry she caught me. I tell you, Hugh, you not only got to be proper, but to have a reputation for being a regular corker on propriety, or you can't have any fun at all. Here it is—oh, and say, I hung all your pictures except an old card-board thing with a drawing on it. Thought maybe you'd throw it away, so I left it on the table."

"Thanks," said MacDermott, dryly.

She lingered a moment as he stood on his threshold. Then he added:

"Thanks, Mayme; you've really been very good."

"You're welcome, Hugh," she said; then she added, with a smile that was almost shy, "Welcome home."

He nodded to her, and, entering his room, lit the gas. He cast his hat on the top of his water-pitcher, tried the springs of the bed to see whether it was what Callahan called a "camel-back" or not, and then looked about him. It was a square box of a place, not much larger than his own at Callahan's. He was glad to see that the colors were quiet and pretty, and that the wall-paper was good. He frowned at Miss Broomer's arrangement of his pictures, and then he took one down and held it in his hands. It was Rossetti's annunciation, "Ecce Ancilla Domini." Still holding it, he picked up the sketch Miss Broomer had called the "old card-board thing." It was a poor drawing of a face—so poor that he had put a veil of pencilling across it. He had not needed to label it; between it and the face of the girl in the Annunciation there was a shadowy resemblance.

MacDermott turned down the light and went to the window with the pictures. The gentle spring breeze brushed in on his cheek; across the street a young wife was waiting

for her husband; a college boy was plodding homeward whistling "O Promise Me," and from some window in an apartment building he could hear the faint notes of a violin.

"The lady of my dreams," he murmured. "Ah, but you've travelled a long way inward in that country of my dreams!"

He saw again an old orchard, and a young girl in black, with perplexed eyes and a soft, wise mouth. The vision came rarely now. When he had first returned to America it had been with a sense of irremediable loss. He tried to tell himself that he had seen her but once, that it was nothing; and always something answered him, "I've loved her ever since I was born, and now, just seeing her, I have lost her."

For months and years afterward he tried to refer all his actions to her. "Would she approve this? Would she not scorn that compromise?" They had talked perhaps two hours, and yet he felt that he knew how she would look at things. At the opera, in the theatre, he would think, "She could wear such a hat or such a gown." In a picture-gallery he tried to know what pictures she would like.

At first, except for his dreams of her, he had been curiously alone. He had worked unceasingly to get on in the law; the few lawyers he met were, like himself, very busy, and the early clients of Furlong not people of whom he could make friends. In his world and Furlong's there was too much work to do, too much fervor of reform to take his energy. But he grew stronger intellectually, and became a force in their little corner of politics. As time went on, and he met some women, he still judged them by her; she still shaped all his ideals, but always she was retreating a

little. He tried to hold her; there were moments when he talked to her as if she were with him.

"Don't you know that you have to stay with me?" he would say. "I can't work always. It's a summer night, and I'm twenty-six. Don't you know there are voices luring me? Don't you know that I want to look you straight in the eyes to-morrow?"

And again he would laugh at her as at a boy's silly fancy —a jeering, cynical laugh that hurt him afterward. Then he would refuse to think of her for days, but soon or late he tried to call her back.

"You know," he would say, "we don't believe in self-pity, you and I; but I am singularly alone in the world—aren't you? And don't you think we need each other?"

During the past few months he had put away his dreams. He was known as a young lawyer of strong promise, a fact that he modestly attributed to Furlong; he had been given some important cases; he knew that he was going to be approached by an infamous corporation, and he had composed an ironic speech of rejection; he was for The People. He could look back on a decade of hard, tireless work, and it seemed to him that he had got very little out of it for himself. Was he wise to scream, like Brand, "No compromise; all or nothing?" Did even Furlong do that? He was irritated at this mood. Why should he be warring with shadows?

At times he was glad to avail himself of Miss Broomer's company. She liked to shoot the chutes; very good, that was a harmless occupation, and he liked to hear her easy, sprightly talk. When she had urged him to come to her boarding-house, after Callahan's trip to Ireland had made

easy his moving, he had agreed. He must not live so much alone; any sort of good-natured people would serve to rest his nerves.

But to-night—the home-going people had moved him to a sense of his loneliness. Down-town it hardly seemed as if people had homes; one thought only of business. But here people were living out their personal lives, the part belonging just to themselves. He alone seemed to have no affiliations. And so, with a sense of nearness, he put the two pictures against his cheek, and murmured:

"If you would come back to me, I'd try to be worth it; I really would."

Just then the dinner-bell rang. He put the pictures gently on the table, turned up the gas, and fumbled for his hair-brushes.

VI

THE LADY OF REALITY

TALK and laughter, floating up two flights of stairs, guided MacDermott toward the dining-room. As he passed the office Mrs. Harker hurried out, and said, in her crisp little voice:

"Now, Mr. MacDermott, I want you to feel at home. I always say that I prefer to ignore the business relations I have with my guests and think of them as members of one large family."

"That's very good of you," he murmured.

"And so," she continued, with a smile that she considered motherly, "I'll take you to the table where you are to sit. I always prefer to introduce new guests myself."

She paused a moment at the door of the double dining-room.

"The wall-paper is real cheery," she pointed out, and MacDermott obediently glanced at the staring yellow walls, aware of white shirt-waists and black suits, and faces that suspended operations a moment to look at him. There was a good deal of glare and clatter about the room: the lights were bright, the people laughed, knives and spoons were used with enough sweep of gesture to display all the flash

that was in them, and there was nodding of heads and gesticulating.

Mrs. Harker led him from the large room, which had three well-filled tables, to an inner room where were two smaller tables, at one of which he saw Mayme in a gaudy pink silk waist. Mrs. Harker guided him to a vacant chair near the foot of the table.

"All here?" she said. "All but Mr. Ames, who is invited out. Then I can introduce every one at once. This is Mr. MacDermott, everybody. Now, Mr. MacDermott, I'll begin at your right. This is Miss Tower—"

A lean, sad lady in brown bowed to him with an upward twist of her neck.

"Professor Satterly."

A sallow young man, intent on his dinner, nodded, hardly troubling to raise his eyes.

"Miss Gunn."

An overdressed young woman whose pompadour was as dark and fluffy as Miss Broomer's smiled with great amiability.

"Mr. Gastman."

A ruddy little man said, genially, "H' are you?"

"Miss Broomer I believe you've met: Mr. Andrews beside her."

Andrews bowed sourly, as if he resented sharing Miss Broomer's attention with one more man.

"And the lady to your left, Miss Carew."

MacDermott, dizzy with much bowing, did not really see his left-hand neighbor till he had slipped into his chair and answered an aimless remark addressed to him by dreary Miss Tower. Then he turned, and the talk and clatter

about him died into nothingness; the napery and silver shining under the bright lights whirled away blazingly. His dreams came back; they were real and the business world he knew was false. The true land of the living was a place where there were knights with each a quest, and comforting ladies with loving hearts, dim forests where one could rest with the beloved, silver bells to chime music to lull one to sleep, robes of scarlet and azure for the lady of dreams, and a slender circlet of rubies and dark gold for her neck. The years slipped away; there was no such thing as time; his heart sang the song of all dreamers; and he wondered if the vision would still be there if he looked at her again.

At last he did venture to look again, and to speak.

"It *is* Miss Carew of Kilmanan, is it not?"

She turned her head quickly, and he could look into the dear hazel eyes and see the pale-brown hair falling softly, like a bird's wing. She hardly seemed older in eight years; perhaps because she had lost something of her grave child look; a hint of humor showed about her serene mouth.

She gazed at him blankly for a moment or two, and then, strugglingly, recognition swam into her eyes.

"Yes, I do remember you now. It was a long time ago that you saved me from falling from the orchard wall."

"I can't realize that you are here," he said. "I did not dream you would ever really come."

He was given some heavenly nectar in a soup-dish, and he had the wit to pick up a soup-spoon.

"Mr. Furlong called once or twice after I saw you," she said; "and he made me feel that Chicago is the place for new people to begin—people who are absolutely new."

Miss Gunn poked forward her pompadour, and addressed MacDermott coquettishly.

"I've just dug it out of Miss Broomer that you and she were fed from the same spoon in babyhood," she giggled.

"Hardly that," he said, as politely as he could.

"Oh no," cried Miss Broomer; "but we were neighbors, and Hu—Mr. MacDermott fought my first battle for me. 'Bout the first thing I remember is his fighting Skinny because Skinny pulled my hair."

"'Spanish cavalier stood in his retreat,'" said Miss Gunn, with much laughter.

"Ah, Miss Broomer," said Andrews, clutching his breast with a tragic air, "had I but been there to fight for thee!"

"Go it, Henry Irving," cheered Miss Gunn.

MacDermott turned back to Miss Carew much as one of his old knights would have hastened from a land of mischievous elves and ugly enchantment.

"I have never forgotten that beautiful orchard," he said; "the peace and loveliness—"

Moira dropped her eyes; she did not want him to know how homesick she was, how thankful to be able to talk to any one who had seen the places she loved.

"I have rented it to a cousin who cares almost as much about it as I do," she said.

"And your sister?" he ventured.

"She is in India with a cousin; she went some months ago."

Miss Tower addressed him timidly.

"Your dinner is getting cold," she said, "and things are so hard to digest when they are lukewarm."

He answered her amiably, and presently Moira ad-

dressed her and he was free to think. The wonder of her being there! Alive, and not just memory; her eyelashes rising and falling, the light finding and slipping on the pale-brown of her hair, her little, slim hands using knife and fork—eating, just like other people!

He looked up to realize that Miss Gunn had a glance prepared for him, and that Miss Broomer was commiserating him because his seat was so far from hers. For a moment he shuddered at their obvious good looks, and then he pitied them because his lady made them seem so petty and common. And they were ignoring her; they thought she had "no style"; they probably believed that she could not attract gentlemen—that was how they would put it. And to think that she must sit at the table with them, and listen to their horrible voices! From that evening he conceived a bitter hatred of the letter "r."

Something in Moira's accent suggested to Professor Satterly that she had travelled. He explained to her that he spent his summers abroad, visiting systematically a different country each year. Next summer he was going to master Ireland and Scotland. What did Miss Carew know?

MacDermott listened to her words, admiring the way she avoided any answer to excessively personal questions, and the skill with which she included Miss Tower and himself in the conversation. Miss Broomer's interest was excited when she knew that Moira came from "abroad." Poor Mayme, in her way, was as keen a lover of what she conceived to be culture as the professor, and perhaps her pursuit of it was not much less enlightened.

Oh, the wonderful world with her in it! When he glanced at her nothing seemed real but beauty and hope. They

were both far away in the old Kilmanan orchard, where just a few peaches and plums grew on each tree, just a few flowers in one bed—the background to the one woman of all the ages.

Three courses: soup, a meat, and two vegetables in greasy little side dishes; the young men speculating as to whether it was worth while to send back for more.

"Aw, chance it, Gastman," urged Andrews; "Mother Harker always has a soft spot in her heart for you."

"Yes, he's so nice and round, she can begin on him if the price of beef goes up much more," tittered Miss Gunn.

"Nay, nay, Pauline; here's yet a better way," said the theatrical Andrews, and deftly stole Miss Gunn's vegetable.

And then the speculations as to what the dessert would be, the eager craning to see the first dish carried in, and the disgusted settling back into seats as Andrews whispered:

"Cottage pudding! Miss Broomer, take back the heart that thou gavest. It won't sustain me against such a disappointment."

And she must listen to this!

When the dinner was over Mayme stopped Miss Carew.

"I'm going to call on you," she said. "I'd 'a' done it before if I'd 'a' known you were a stranger here."

"Thank you," said Moira, gently.

"That's all right. I know myself what it is not to know any one. I'd be real pleased to hear you talk of the places you've travelled to. I'd love to travel myself."

Moira smiled and passed on into the hall.

"She's real nice, I think," Mayme said, retarding Hugh's

footsteps. "You can't judge from clothes, I say; maybe I could give her a hint about her dressing."

Hugh shuddered.

"For goodness' sake, Mayme, can't you see she's the best-dressed woman in the room?" he said. "If you'd just study a gentlewoman you'd know that."

"Huh! don't you suppose I know more about clothes than a man?" asked Mayme, scornfully.

But he knew from her speculative glance that she intended to go further into the matter. Mayme was always looking for light.

Mrs. Harker was proud of her "music-room," into which most of the boarders had gone. It was a big room with pink wall-paper, euphemistically called "old-rose," on which were hung at exact intervals portraits of young gentlemen helping young ladies into boats; young gentlemen playing tennis with young ladies; a mother in green singing at a piano for a small child in white; an eighteenth-century young lady teaching a child to dance to the edification of a lounging young gentleman in small-clothes; and a young lady with tilted chin looking wistfully into her future. This last particularly moved Miss Gunn.

There was a piano on which Miss Gunn played and helped those musically inclined to sing college-songs. On the fat, pink chairs and sofas others of the young people sat with an air of elegant leisure. They were cheerful, hearty human beings, trying to forget the hard work they had been doing all day, and quite successfully interesting each other; but MacDermott stood in the hall with Miss Broomer, looking in on them, and he shrank from them all.

Andrews joined them in the hall.

"Say, how about that walk?" he asked Mayme.

"All right," she replied, with a backward glance over her shoulder at MacDermott. He did not see it. He was assuming gloomily that his lady had gone up-stairs. But on the chance of seeing her he went into one of the little alcoves off the music-room, and found her sitting by the window.

"May I come and talk about Kilmanan?" he asked.

"It seems so strange to hear it spoken of," she said, as he took a chair opposite her.

But his next question cunningly had very little to do with Kilmanan. He wanted to know how long his dream would last, when he would have to leave his magical forests for the dreary streets of Chicago, when his lady would be borne away over dismal plains to a castle with a wall too high for him to scale.

"I wonder if you will be able to stay away from home very long," he said, tentatively.

"It depends upon how much pleased my present employer is with my services," she replied.

"How dare any one employ you!" he murmured.

Moira affected not to hear.

"I was quite fortunate to pick up this work," she said. "On shipboard I met a lady whose sister wanted some one to talk French to her and sew and embroider all day long. I suited, and here I am."

He wondered if there was not an undertone of bitterness in her words; his worship of her had made him quick of divination, for he could not know of the humiliations that might be involved in Moira's work. Her employer was not competent to judge her French accent, but she kept self-respect by finding fault with the sewing.

"I get Thursdays off, and all evenings," Moira went on, smiling. "That's very liberal, even in this land of the free."

"We must find some other work," he said. "All day long is too long for you."

"I'm searching the papers and answering advertisements," she responded. "I shall give my employer notice as soon as I can."

"You must get among different people," he said; "it won't do."

She looked at him with a friendly smile.

"I like it here," she said; "people are very kind. I'm just Moira Carew, a worker like themselves."

To Moira the boarding-house was like a little republic. There was so much liberty—no question of chaperonage, for example. It was a cross-roads in life where people met and parted in good-fellowship. She was impressed with the genuine innocence and fundamental goodness of these men and women who got on without the social conventions to which she had been accustomed. Sometimes their ways amused her, but she had enough of human appreciation not to lose sight of their real value.

"I shall stay here," Moira added, "unless I find something with a princely salary attached."

She rose, and he was reminded of her smile of dismissal in the orchard of Kilmanan.

"You've been very good, too," she said.

"I've let myself be happy," he returned, unable to keep the words from being intense. "I love to talk of Ireland. I wish you would let me read you Mr. Callahan's letters about Kilmanan."

"Ah, if you would," she said. "Good-night, Mr. MacDermott."

As she walked away he had a poignant sense of loss. He was reminded of his baby-boy days on the Wexford seacoast, when the ebb-tide used to take the sea away from him and he was sure it would never return. She was too lovely to do more than just pass through a man's life, a gleam, a promise that could never be fulfilled.

VII

MOIRA MEETS A DEMOCRAT

S Moira passed up-stairs Mayme came back from her stroll with Andrews. He had cut it short bluntly with the announcement that he had another "date" to keep, and she was annoyed with him for leaving her with a whole evening on her hands. She looked at MacDermott standing in the hall, but he plainly showed an absorption which he meant should be undisturbed. Miss Gunn had gone out with ruddy little Gastman, and Mayme had no one to talk to and nothing to read.

"Guess I'll call on that Miss C'rew," she said. "It's got to be done, long's I said I would. Fourth floor, too."

She mounted the stairs and made her way to a back room. Miss Carew opened the door to her knock.

"Guess you didn't expect me so soon," said Mayme, entering. "My, you've done a lot with this room! I had it once, and I couldn't stand the look of it."

The walls, a dull green, held only one or two pictures. Moira had removed all superfluous furniture. There was in sight only the camp-bed, the chest of drawers, a table, and two chairs. From the poor materials she had contrived to make the room look simple and graceful.

Mayme sat on the couch and fingered the tapestry of which the cover was made.

"My, but this is swell goods!" she said. "I'd a friend knew a lot about furniture, and he educated me. He was in a very up-to-date decorator's. I believe in learning all you can, don't you, Miss C'rew?"

"I suppose I do," Moira returned. "I haven't thought much about it."

Her tone was a little remote, and MacDermott would have felt that she sat in her chair with something of the air of a princess, a little embarrassed at having to receive an alien and too familiar populace. Moira was a good deal of a liberal, and she had quite as much initiative as Mayme, though of a different sort. She had come to America because she wanted to adventure in the new land that held so much promise for women. All day long she liked to brush with life; even slights and rudenesses she took without too much shrinking, because they were part of the experience she sought; thus she got her share in the land of the living. But at night she wanted to make her own little world in her own little room; then her land of the living was the memory of the soft voices of home; the old gray castle shouldering up to a gray Irish sky; the long sunny orchard against the walls of which the slim trees clung; even the vegetable garden where she had worked like one of the Kilmanan village girls; the old picture-gallery, and the old books of Celtic legend. So she was not yet in her heart welcoming Mayme.

Mayme had been glancing at the pictures and cushions and flowers in the room. There was an air about it that was affecting even her untutored sense.

"Maybe you are one of those people that know things, anyway," she said. "Or maybe you just unconsciously learn. We Americans assimilate quickly, but we make a big howl about it while we're doing it. I do, anyhow, and I suppose I'm a type."

"There are so many types of Americans," Moira murmured.

"Say," said Mayme, abruptly, "Mr. Andrews was telling me about that lady you're with. She's his cousin's wife, and so he knows. You ought to leave her."

Moira compressed her lips, and Mayme blushed.

"I don't mean to interfere," she said, "but I was thinking if you did want to leave her, I know of a place where they might take—that you might like."

Moira did not answer for a moment, and Mayme went on, hastily:

"I am stenographer to Mr. Servan, a very bright business man—rich, too; I see him a billionaire before he's through. Well, they're from the West, and his wife came off a farm and never had a chance. Oh, she can dress, and all that; just picks out a swell dressmaker and tells her to go ahead. But her grammar is something frightful, and I know Mr. Servan would be glad to have some one that would kind of tutor her. I don't mean teach her grammar alone, but manners and all that. I have the feeling," went on Mayme, a little breathlessly, "that maybe, having been abroad, you know how things should be done, and could teach her how to give parties, and all that."

Moira's sense of withdrawal was all gone. This impossible young woman whose generous curves seemed filling her little room had a spirit to match. She was offering of

her own largesse alms to a weaker sister, and who was Moira that she should be unresponsive because the thrust of the giving hand was clumsy? In this big West there need be no officers, no rank and file; all should go marching, some fast, some slow, down the road of the world, friends or enemies by choice or chance, weak or strong by fate, meeting their experiences with a high heart in whatever form they came. So Moira smiled at Mayme, and said, with vivid eyes:

"It's really very good of you to interest yourself in my affairs."

"I know Mrs. Servan," went on Mayme, "and she's a nice woman. She treats me as if I had a million, and so she would you. The worst of having to work is if you are with a person that makes you feel you're a slave, not to your work, but to another human being."

Moira looked up with rising interest. Miss Broomer had perceptions, evidently.

"'Course, being rich, she'll pay well," went on Mayme, "and that's an object to any one. Well, you just say if you want me to speak about it, Miss C'rew."

"But, really, you are taking me on trust very largely, Miss Broomer," protested Moira.

"Once I get my eyes open, they're open," returned Mayme, with her expansive smile. "I'll see Mr. Servan and let you know. My, what a pretty photo on your table!"

Moira handed her the picture.

"That is my sister," she said.

"Isn't she just beautiful," cried Mayme; "light hair and eyes, I presume?"

"Yes."

"And such a grand figure! My, if she was to come here to visit you she'd have people turning round to stare after her!"

Mayme spoke as if that were a consummation devoutly to be wished of woman.

"Well," she resumed, putting down the picture, "I suppose she's abroad?"

"Yes."

"It's real nice when a family can afford to have one daughter at home," generalized Mayme. "My, I wish we were all born with a couple of thousand a year! But how I do run on! You haven't told me how you like Chicago yet."

"Very much, what I've seen of it."

Mayme lolled back on the pillows.

"It must seem a very hustling place after the old country. We work too hard, though; men and women all are just on the point of breaking down. We all say this, nowadays, and peg on as hard as ever. Take Mr. MacDermott, the gentleman who came new to-night; he's just killing himself."

"He does look worn," Moira said.

"He's a State representative, and in a law firm, too, with State Senator Furlong; he does the bulk of the law business. 'Course Mr. Furlong has a big reputation, but I always say Mr. MacDermott is just as smart, and if he were forty instead of thirty he'd be just as far along."

"I should think he might be very clever at law," Moira said.

"And at politics; he gets plenty of votes for Furlong.

And he's so good, especially to the poor, little, half-fed kids over in his ward. Oh, well, I guess having known Hugh ever since I was a little bit of a kid, he's a sort of favorite of mine. Well, I must go. Do return my call soon, Miss C'rew."

"I will," said Moira, rising. "It was good of you to come."

"Well, when I say I'm going to do a thing, I like to do it," explained Mayme; "'d-night."

Mayme walked slowly down-stairs and into her own room, where she reflectively turned up the gas and looked at her bold, black eyes, ruddy cheeks, and up-standing pompadour.

"Well, I don't see why she should make me dissatisfied with myself," she mused, "just because she's stiffer with me than she is with Hugh. I'm better-looking."

She sat down in her rocking-chair and swayed vigorously.

"Didn't talk much, but somehow I felt she knew her way about. Guess she's one of those people that make you feel what they are, and don't have to talk to show what's in 'em. And then, I've heard that the men over there exert themselves to amuse the women, and of course that takes a lot off a poor girl's shoulders."

She undid her heavy black hair, and then said, half aloud:

"Well, she's got me all right, all right, and I guess I can learn a lot from her. I bet she was brung—brought up well."

Suddenly she stopped rocking, unable to banish thus her vague, uncomfortable sensations.

"Oh, well," poor Mayme sighed, "I'd know why I

should be getting blue about nothing. Cheer up, Mayme, some men like black eyes better than hazel."

Meanwhile, MacDermott had found the house too small. He had hurried up Washington Avenue and along the wide, green midway with its tall lights, and through the park to the lake. There was a faint moon, and a peculiar thick quality in the air that gave the effect of muffled light. The voices of the few couples on the wide stone walk above the beach were subdued. In front the high, dark waves pushed softly to shore, breaking almost without sound.

He sat on a bench and watched it all, trying to realize that she had actually come, and telling himself that he must not count on her staying. But immediately he began to plan lures that would keep her. He must tell Furlong that she was here. Furlong knew a few people of the right sort, who would be glad to call on Mr. Carew's granddaughter. She must be offered some people from whom she could choose. He could think of her only as choosing, never as being chosen.

There was some bitterness in his excited planning—bitterness that he could not do more for her; that she must earn her own living. Ah, if he could but dower her with everything, as the knights of old their ladies! And all the time he was fighting back the crowning bitterness—the fear that some one worthy of her would come even to this third-rate boarding-house and take her away from him. But no one could ever rob him of his dreams, and now that she had come into his world, always there was the chance that he might be of service to her.

A cloud came over the faint moon. Hugh got up and faced a chilling western wind.

"MacDermott, man," he said, "this is Chicago, twentieth century; you live on Washington Avenue; so go home and don't be a drivelling idiot. Callahan used to say you were always one to find a nest of eggs too good for any hen to set on."

VIII

THE HELPING HAND OF MISS BROOMER

MACDERMOTT had schooled himself so that he should expect nothing in regard to his lady, but he was disappointed next morning when he went to breakfast to see that Moira had gone. Professor Satterly and himself were the only ones at table. He ate hastily, and hurried down-town, eager to kill with work the long hours till he could return. At dinner he was early in his seat, and soon his eyes had the delight of seeing her walk into the dining-room. She wore a black dress of some silky material that thinned into cobweb lace above her shoulders. How many generations it must take to mould such beautiful shoulders, he thought. The light fell on her pale-brown hair as she walked, making it seem almost golden. How beautiful her eyes were as she smiled at him and said:

"I'm not late, after all."

He did not hear dull Miss Tower when she pulled out her chair to sit beside him, and he suffered an indignant dislike of her and of the others, because they were going to disturb him by dining. Why must the dining-room be the most natural place of meeting? Why must all these people come into his land of dreams?

"There's Dickie Ames," Mayme said, as a dapper little youth paused in the door of the dining-room. He was very graceful and pink and white, but he tried to counteract possible effeminacy by cutting close the hair on his bullet head and affecting a slow, long stride. He saw MacDermott and made him an elaborate salaam. Then he saw Moira. After that Dickie acted like a blind man, colliding with a waiter, and feeling his way to his place along the backs of people's chairs.

He sat by Mayme, who immediately presented him to Moira. Then Dickie, secure under the general babble of talk, confided his emotions to Mayme.

"She can have me, Mayme. I'm glad I'm studying art. I shall ask her to pose for me, and then I shall have that little head of hers painted upon a background of pure gold."

"Oh, you; you're always getting struck on every new person," Mayme said.

Dickie shut his eyes rapidly in dissent.

"I? Did I get struck on you, Mary, or Gunnie here? At the Art Institute my taste is considered very recherché. These modern days are hard, and one must go slow, but when I have sufficiently charmed her I shall invite her to marry me."

"Huh!" scoffed Mayme; "what 'll she do with you, you silly kid?"

"Am I?" he said. "Well, then, you watch Jenkens."

Dickie had a talent for making himself quickly acquainted with the members of any household with which he connected himself. After his first day at Mrs. Harker's he had furnished himself with the history of the English waiter,

Jenkens. The man had seen better days; he had been butler at the houses of the nobility; but he sank to the level of a six-dollar-a-week boarding-house because of a marked peculiarity. Every three or four weeks Jenkens requested a brief holiday; if it were not given him he took it. An observant person could tell when the request was coming by the careful way in which Jenkens carried and set down dishes, and by the odor of peppermint on his breath. And now Jenkens was standing behind Moira's chair.

"Well, what about Jenkens? He's just standing up."

"He's behind her chair," said Dickie, solemnly; "and if you moved in exclusive circles, Mary, which you never will, you would know that Jenkens had paid Miss Carew the highest compliment man can give woman short of asking her to marry him or leaving her his fortune. He has signified that he considers her a thorough-bred. Has he ever stood behind any one's chair before?"

"Huh! that's nothing," said Mayme.

"He's removed himself as far from us as he dared, because he knows we're not the real thing; we're pinchbeck."

"Oh, come off," said Mayme, impatiently.

She bent over to Moira with a proprietor-like manner, and elaborately drew her out on the subject of travel, to the edification of the table, Dickie especially following Mayme's questions with intense interest. MacDermott was proud to see the way Moira changed the subject without hurting Mayme's feelings.

As they rose from dinner, Jenkens pulling out Moira's chair, the resourceful Dickie managed to join her.

"Isn't it true," he asked, in a mysterious tone, "that this

happy waiter used to dandle you on his knee in babyhood—his babyhood, I mean, of course—and then tearfully followed you here when you insisted on leaving home? Is it true, Miss Carew?"

Moira laughed; no one could resist Dickie.

"I never saw him before. I haven't seen him yet; but I've noticed that he can serve."

"You disappoint me," Dickie said, keeping beside her as they moved toward the music-room. "It is my function to discover and inspire romance in the dry lives of those I meet. Don't you think we have too little romance in the world, Miss Carew?"

"Not in America," Moira said—"that is, there is always romance in the place that's not your home, where you are seeking adventure."

"You can't get any one who lives here to say there's romance," remarked Dickie; "we have to go farther West for it. That's my conviction, though I lecture to the people at the Art Institute on finding it in our midst. Every time I say 'in our midst' they fire a paint-brush at me—that is, the fellows; the girls like to hear me."

"You spend your life quite altruistically, then?" asked Moira.

"Oh, quite. I confide in the girls utterly—that is, I tell them all that their experience in life qualifies them to appreciate, and they comfort me by telling me I've lots of time left to make a fool of myself in again. I wish you'd come to visit our old shop there some day."

"Yes, thank you," Moira said, going toward the stairway. "I want to see everything I can here."

"And do let me take you around," called Dickie after

her; "you see, Miss Carew, I do not suffer from hereditary reticence."

So far Dickie had successfully warded off Miss Broomer and MacDermott, but now Mayme swept him to one side and linked her arm in Moira's.

"The Servans are here," she said, and breezily drew Moira to one of the little alcove rooms.

A middle-aged man was sitting on a sofa beside a stout lady clad in violet. They were curiously alike in their outlines; both had reddish hair touched with gray, faded eyes, and long, thin mouths. But while Servan had the successful business man's expression of shrewdness and decision, Mrs. Servan looked as if the passing winds blew her her opinions and judgments.

Mayme managed to convey by her manner that though Servan employed her, outside the office they moved in the same circle.

"This is Miss C'rew—no, *Ca*rew—the lady I spoke of, Mrs. Servan, and Mr. Servan. And now," she added, with elaborate delicacy, "I'll leave you to talk over things alone."

She strolled into the music-room, where Hugh sat commanding a view both of Moira and of the people in the hall. At the moment he was watching with disfavor the antics of Andrews and Gastman at the foot of the staircase. They were reproducing a scene from a recent emotional drama, Miss Gunn, an interested spectator, following them with mouth and eyes, Dickie Ames a delighted spectator of her.

"Oh, let the poor fellows live," advised Mayme. "Say, Hugh, I've been doing the good Samaritan to-day, and I think that nice little Miss C'rew will pull a job out of it."

"What!" exclaimed MacDermott.

She sat beside him on a fat pink divan which groaned and gave under her weight.

"Say," she asked, "did I ever tell you how I came to have such a pull with Daddy Servan? You've noticed how I go down late and come away early, and sort of run the shop?"

"You always seem to do as you please; but about Miss Carew?"

"Now, let me unfold it gradually, as they say in the books."

Mayme stretched out her large, neat feet and lolled a trifle.

"'Bout two years ago, a few months after Callahan got me my job with Servan, I noticed the old man getting sour on me. Why, I didn't tumble to it at first— Say, ain't you interested in my little spiel? You act as if you were trying to rubber into that room."

MacDermott blushed.

"Not at all; I beg your pardon."

He was, in truth, listening to the gentle murmur of Moira's voice.

"Well," continued Mayme, good-naturedly, "I soon found out that it was because he needed me too much. Servan's little theory was that as soon as a person got indispensable to him, off with his head; got it out of history. He thought I knew too much—and I *had* kept my eyes open. Well, while I was off on vacation, I got a nice little note from Servan saying that changes in the office necessitated dispensing with my services, etc., but I could have the best of references. And what does your aunt Mayme do?"

"Well, what did you do?" asked MacDermott, resignedly.

"I walked in on Monday morning, demanded an interview, and conveyed to him that I was going to stay. Well, he carried on dreadfully, but he gave in, and I stayed. He acted like a bear with a sore head for a while, but I was always pleasant and discreet. Consequence is, he knows I'm safe, and really likes me and trusts me with a lot of his state secrets—I tell you, he's got some that you and Furlong and your crowd 'd like to know—and there we are: both suited."

"And all this bears on—?"

"I'm coming to it. My, but you are impatient! Mamma Servan wants a governess and a manager, and I recommended Miss C'rew, and I judge by the length of their talk in there that she'll carry it off."

MacDermott caught his breath.

"You didn't—! You knew the kind of man he is, and yet you let *her*—" he began.

Mayme's ruddy cheek paled a little.

"Look here, young man, what's it to you?" she asked. "She'll never see him; she's with her. I'm the one has to see him. There's lots of girls just as nice as Miss C'rew have to take orders from men a sight worse than Servan. It seems to me you're mighty excited all of a sudden about Miss C'rew."

MacDermott hesitated.

"I can't tell you all I know about her, Mayme," he said; "but she's not used to—to the sort of thing you and I are. It's different with her—"

"I had to learn. Any nice girl has to get hurt going into

offices, and Miss C'rew don't have to do even that. What the matter is, you were going to try to get her a job yourself and are jealous of me for cutting in first."

There was enough truth in the thrust to bring the blood into his face.

"I s'pose she's maybe told you what she wouldn't let me talk to her about," went on Mayme—"all about how that woman she works for treats her—"

"She hasn't mentioned it, of course, Mayme; I don't know her well enough."

"Well, Andrews told me what this woman—it's his cousin's wife—said to her. I wouldn't talk that way to a dog. 'Miss C'rew,' says she, 'you're not doing this sewing as well as the servant I had before. Te-he-he; that slipped out; but I s'pose people who take money for working for other people are servants.' Gee, I wish she'd just said that to me! But I felt sorry for Miss C'rew, and I tried to help her, and I don't see what call you had to interfere."

"You're quite right, Mayme," he said, after a pause. "I have no right, and you've been kind—kinder than I have. I don't think I ever knew you to do anything that wasn't kind."

"It's more than a person can say of you," she retorted, with quivering chin.

"That's true; please forgive me, Mayme."

"Oh, it's all right," she said, her tone a little dreary. His glance left her and passed into the other room.

Mayme rose, a lump in her throat. "Well, good-night," she said.

"Good-night, Mayme; I'm sorry."

She went out slowly. At the foot of the staircase she paused to give him another chance, but he was looking at Moira. Mayme went up-stairs, unheeding the cheerful call of Andrews.

Left alone, MacDermott allowed most of his glances to stray into the little room where Moira sat. She and Mrs. Servan were side by side on the sofa engaged in talk. Mrs. Servan was the diffident one of the two; she was evidently making timid assents to Moira's remarks. Servan was strolling about the room looking at the pictures. Sometimes MacDermott saw his ample back with the hands clasped behind; sometimes his profile, and then the thin mouth was pursed critically. He plainly showed his belief that those slim young ladies and gentle youths were not to be found in real life. He was thinking that if they were real they were the last people in the world he would want in his office. Also, having something of an imagination, he was quizzically taking the lounging eighteenth-century gentleman and putting him in a centre rush in a football field, and grinning as he saw the boys going through him. Only before the mother playing to her little girl did his face soften; Servan had no children, and he had loved his mother well.

Presently Mrs. Servan and Moira rose and clasped hands in farewell.

"Good-bye, my dear," MacDermott heard Mrs. Servan say; "I feel I'm going to be very fond of you, and I do hope it 'll be mutual. I ain't going to tax your patience more than I must."

Moira made some reply, inaudible but gracious, he knew, and walked with her callers to the door. Then,

without looking into the music-room, she ascended the staircase.

On the second landing she was waylaid by Mayme, who put her head out of her room and inquired with a kind of strained cordiality:

"Well, what luck?"

Moira hesitated, and then said:

"Shall I come in and tell you?"

Mayme threw open the door and revealed herself clad in a flamboyant pink silk kimono. There was a great deal of red in her room; she liked pictures of Indians with lavish head-dresses, college flags, drapes, and racks of photographs. Her window-seat was piled with vivid pillows and her rocking-chair had ribbons strung through the back.

"Sit down," Mayme said. "Hope you don't mind my kimono. I noticed the other night you didn't have one on. Well, I s'pose it's better to keep your clothes on all day long if you can, but I just got to lounge at night. Well, what 'd they say?"

Moira remained standing.

"They were very pleasant," she replied. "I am to go to them as soon as I am free."

"Good pay?" queried Mayme; then she added, hastily, "I ain't asking how much; don't want to know; but is it a raise?"

"Yes, quite," Moira said, moving toward the door.

"Won't you stay?" asked Mayme. "Well, I don't blame you; I'm stupid to-night; got a headache."

"I'm so sorry," Moira said. "Mayn't I get you some camphor?"

A mist swam across Mayme's bright, bold eyes.

"Oh no; 'tain't—'tisn't worth bothering over," she said, quickly. "Say, did I hear Mr. Furlong down-stairs?"

"I don't know, really," replied Moira.

"Oh, Hugh would have had you meet him, if he had dropped in," Mayme said; "he's a remarkable person."

"So I understand," Moira said, her hand on the door.

"Mr. Furlong, he'll go far," said Mayme, rapidly; "he may be governor—United States senator—who knows but president! He just gets the people! And brainy! MacDermott and Callahan are all right, but they can't touch Furlong. He's the people's friend; they all trust him."

"I'm glad he is so popular," said Moira, her eyes on the door, and somehow Mayme felt compelled to open it.

"I hope your head will be better to-morrow," Moira said. "Good-night."

Mayme watched her ascending to the fourth floor.

"Well," she sighed, "I can't help liking her, and she did seem hit with what I said of Furlong." She shut her door and added: "I guess Hugh was right about her clothes. Well, I guess I'll go to bed."

She stood before her looking-glass fingering the pink silk kimono.

"Guess there is too much of it," she thought; "but every one to his own taste, I say."

She hummed a little tune, and going to her closet carefully hung up her kimono. But suddenly she leaned her head against it and her tears rose.

"Oh, *Lord*," she muttered, "what's a poor girl to do that never had a chance to know things!"

IX

MOIRA MEETS A RISING MAN

MACDERMOTT watched his lady's face as one reads and re-reads a beloved poem, except that the poem is always the same and the reader's mood changes, but his lady changed and MacDermott was always the same: wanting to guard her from the rough places in her world. For a few days after her engagement with Mrs. Servan her face was almost joyous. Life was offering a larger field, wider experiences. She joined more freely in the talk of the table; especially was she interested when Servan and Furlong were spoken of; Andrews and Gastman called them rising men, with all the reverence that the average American feels for success, coupled with the opinion that he himself could achieve it, given half a chance. She heard more of Furlong than of Servan, for MacDermott, the hero-worshipper, was preparing the way for his friend who was soon to call.

Moira looked forward to meeting him, for he had gone away from Wexford, as she had, with no better chance, and he had cut a way for himself out of material inhospitable enough, if all she heard of American politics were true. And then, a little to her surprise, she found that he was a

link with home, for, after all, whatever was not home was a lonesome place.

But on the day of his coming her pleasure was dimmed. She was longing for courage, and for a new infusion of democratic feeling. It was all very well to keep saying people were kind, but oh, if only she need not take kindness from such hands as Miss Broomer's or even from Mrs. Servan. She had longed to be free, but she had not realized that there is no such thing as real freedom, real independence. She had not been able to leave an employer who was rude to her; she saw that poverty at home was different from poverty in America, for there she was protected from the grosser humiliations. Yet she recoiled from her own feeling, for her sense of justice told her that vulgarity could take many forms. She pushed away that thought, for the text of it was a letter she had that day received from her sister Ida. She re-read it just before dinner, to see if she could get from it a happier interpretation than she had upon its arrival in the morning. It ran:

"DEAREST MOIRA,—Thank Heaven my stay in Cousin Rose's house won't exceed a month now. Of course, since matters are settled, I can look on her more charitably, for, really, things are hideously expensive here, and she's poor, and her husband has a cousin they've been wanting to bring out, but couldn't while I was on their hands.

"You'll tell me as usual that I'm just alluding, and of course you're always right. It means what I was sent out for—an engagement. It's not the young lieutenant I wrote you of. Cousin Rose is very masterful, and she wouldn't give him any chances, and of course she was sensible. It's

Colonel Sir Arthur Gray, my dear; yes, the one with the medal whom papa knew—and so you can guess his age.

"Cousin Rose saw by my face when he handed us into the rickshaw last night what had happened. She squeezed my arm and almost shouted, 'You dear, you did bring it off!' And Cousin Walter, who met us half asleep at the door, woke up and gave me a wobbly kiss, and said, 'Gad! I hope his bad heart won't take him off till it's all over!'

"I went to bed and cried and felt better. This morning I did rather wish we were all back at Kilmanan, you digging the cabbages and I mending the lace. But then people came calling to wish me joy, and I knew by the way they talked that I ought to feel grateful. I am, of course. He was very kind when he came later on, and looked very well. One doesn't mind his being florid, for that's the prevailing color in elderly gentlemen here. He brought me a very lovely ring and a necklace. He'd simply overpower me if I'd let him; he really loves me very much.

"He wants an immediate wedding, so Cousin Rose took me out shopping all morning. We've bought some lovely things, and of course that means I'll have to borrow of Cousin Rose and pay her out of my allowance later—I mean what you give me from the rent of the castle, of course. Sir Arthur—I haven't felt able to say 'Arthur' yet—promises to be generous about a settlement, Cousin Walter says. I don't want to know anything about that part of it. He's not too rich, though.

"Moira, dear, do come out here when I'm married. There are some people of your own sort, and I always do feel jollier when you are with me. Some one said to me this morning, 'I suppose you are perfectly happy?' And I

said I should be when you came. One wants one's own people.

"But I am running on, and Cousin Rose has come in to say it's too late to write any more. She says it's bad for my complexion. Anything she doesn't want me to do is bad for my complexion. When I'm married I'll be free. I really am jolly lucky. Write me at once, dear Moira.

"IDA."

Moira shook her head sadly. Then she smiled.

"Really," she thought, "is Cousin Rose much better than Miss Broomer? Ah, well, they're both what they must be, I suppose. And Ida is in India, and I am here, because that was the way we were forced to choose."

She tore the letter into little pieces and went slowly down to dinner, where she plunged MacDermott into gloom because he read her face.

After dinner they sat in an alcove room, and, for want of something else to say, he told her again how glad he was that she had consented to go to Mrs. Servan's, wondering with something like an inward chuckle if the knights of old ever bored their ladies by repeating the same remark over and over. Did a real sword in the hand and a helmet on the head give a man a flow of words that would interest the beloved, or did loving then sometimes make a man stupid? He recalled a note he had that morning received from Mrs. Haraghey asking him laboriously for why didn't he come back to the West Side and stop a night or two? She had beefsteak and onions three nights running, and if they couldn't bring him at all, was it a young lady, bad luck to her, was holding him away? Would he come back and

let Mrs. Haraghey clap an eye on him, and then she'd see was Angus, the master of love, trying to snake him into his garden. For the love of St. Patrick and St. Bridget, would he please confess to her if he had lost his head and his heart entirely?

Yes, he had; and so he said once again how very, very good it was of Moira to take care of Mrs. Servan. Moira laughed at his words.

"You talk of my going to Mrs. Servan's as if it were a house-party," she said. "I like her. She's very pleasant and simple."

"How good you are!" he said, softly. "You come here; you see so much crudity (oh, I know the kind of people, the only kind, you've met), and yet you see nothing but good in us."

"Really, Mr. MacDermott," she said, "I've been shown as much kindness here as I ever was at home. The way is different, of course, but that does not matter so much as one might think. Even at home a charming manner meant nothing to me unless behind it there was real—real character, I think you call it in this country."

"I always knew you were like that," he thought.

"I shall be very happy with Mrs. Servan, I think," she said, meditatively. "She spoke of the terms in such a shamefaced way, as if she wanted me to feel like a guest or a friend."

"Are you going to live there?" asked MacDermott, in fear.

"Not now; they are boarding. I simply spend the day. I believe I can make something of Mrs. Servan," she mused.

"I am sure you can," he agreed.

"That's an odd thing for me to say," laughed Moira; "but, you know, on the estate we had rather a patriarchal manner toward the people. We used to go down to the cottages and help doctor them, and order them to keep the pig outside, and that sort of thing. It rather gives one a managing habit."

"I know," he assented; "one gets like that in politics."

He was happy. She was talking to him as if he were an old friend. All the others were in the music-room, and for once the songs they were singing were soft and low; the windows were open and a sweet spring breeze blew in; the twilight sounds outside were subdued; and here she spoke, and he could see her eyes and the soft wing of her hair. If only Furlong would be a little late and the dream would last!

But even as he prayed it Furlong came through the music-room, and he rose to greet him. Moira liked the worshipping way he looked at Furlong and the older man's hearty response. It spoke well for both of them.

As Furlong came forward to meet her with out-stretched hand, she saw that the years had been kind to him. He had fulfilled his promise of stoutness, and his black hair was crisped about the temples with gray; but the lines in his pale face had scarcely deepened, his wide, blue eyes were as keen and quick as ever, and as he advanced to meet her his smile had the same attractiveness which had pleased her eight years before.

Furlong was a man one instinctively liked. At first one felt his radiating health and good humor and his sense of power and competence. These were the framework of the man, and within were fine details—a knowledge of men, a

sense of tolerance, a love for good talk and for handsome people, a love of poetry and of knowledge.

"So you really came, Miss Carew!" he said. "It seems like home to see you."

That made his greeting at once personal and impersonal; at once it made them friends, and MacDermott saw and was glad that Moira was pleased.

As she seated herself by the window she replied:

"One of the last drives I took at home was near Furlong house. You will want me to tell you about it."

"I could never hear too much about home," he replied.

She told him of old places and familiar people, and MacDermott listened, feeling a little remote in spite of her remarks to him. Then Furlong asked her some questions of local Irish politics.

"You see, I've not forgotten how surprised I was at the little girl who had it all at her fingers' ends eight years ago," he said.

MacDermott reflected for a moment on the neutralizing quality of Furlong's smile. If a remark was too familiar, the smile seemed to make it not personal, but only broadly human; if he said something a little cold, the smile added geniality. Furlong had, indeed, a wonderful gift with people. He could respond to the new city ideal of a good-looking, dignified politician, and when he was in remote country districts he could delight a neighborhood of men by sitting up half the night telling funny stories.

Moira answered his questions, and then began to talk of what she had learned of American politics, and of how difficult it was for her to attach a personality to a name. Furlong offered to take her to hear some political speaking,

and she accepted eagerly. And MacDermott, falling into the phraseology of his childhood, told himself that he was sitting there like a stoat-in-bottle, when he might just as well be saying all that Furlong was saying, and receiving the wonderful dower of her interest. He remembered with a smile how he had once seen Skinny go down at a critical moment in baseball because he lost his head, and Callahan had taken occasion to moralize and warn his boy that feelings were as deceitful as the English government unless a man held his hands and knees on the throat and chest of them.

Furlong told her what he was trying to do in the city, what the proposed reforms were, the methods of his party, illustrating with laughable stories and happy phrases.

"But I don't want to listen to reform people only," she said, with sparkling eyes. "I want to hear the most corrupt Democrats and Republicans there are, too."

"Then you must meet Callahan," laughed Furlong.

MacDermott compressed his lips. It was the first time his hero had ever displeased him. Furlong caught the expression.

"I beg your pardon, Hugh," he added. "I was thinking of what he stands for in politics."

"I should wish to meet Mr. Callahan in any case," Moira said. "I am glad he is returning to Chicago so soon. I owe him a great deal; he was most considerate in business matters, so my lawyer said."

"There's not a better-hearted man in the world," MacDermott remarked, intensely.

"We politicians have a large charity for each other," said Furlong."

MacDermott was silent. He wondered if the little rankling resentment he felt against Furlong were not a beginning of jealousy. Of course, he said, savagely—of course, Furlong would attract her; they knew some of the same people at home; Furlong was of her class, though not of her rank. He was a rising figure in politics, and she loved politics, while he himself was only Furlong's useful tool. And then he felt a surge of remorseful affection toward Furlong; he was glad to be useful to such a good and great man. When Furlong rose to go, MacDermott got his hat to accompany him to the train, though he knew that would deprive him of the moment alone with his lady for which he craved.

Moira gave her hand to Furlong as he said:

"And may I come again?"

"I shall be very glad," she returned.

She smiled at MacDermott as he followed Furlong; then, still standing by the window, she watched the two for a moment as they passed down the street—two tall, black figures under the electric light, blurring into darkness as they passed rapidly out of her vision.

Outside, Furlong was talking of her.

"You see, Hugh, what it is to be born with blood. Now, Miss Carew was never outside the south of Ireland till she came here. Her grandmother educated her; she never had a master in her life. I suppose she made most of her own clothes, and yet—"

MacDermott nodded.

"If people knew who she was," began Furlong; "but of course I respect her wishes on that point. You were right to count on my seeing that she meets some of the proper people."

MacDermott said nothing; Furlong, and even Miss

Broomer, could help his lady, and he could do nothing but love her. If only he had not worked so hard; if only he had accepted the invitations that always come to a rising young bachelor. While he was in the midst of his doleful revery, Furlong abruptly changed the subject, dropping his feudal tone.

He began to talk of the People's Universal Gas and Light Company, for which he had been asked to be attorney. Though he had supposed, he said, that the company merely covered a scheme to "sandbag" the other gas company of the city, who, after the streets were torn up, would pay a price for the withdrawal of the new rival, yet now, having talked to Servan and other stockholders, he had been convinced that the company was genuine. When MacDermott replied that it would seem odd for one of their firm to be a corporation lawyer, Furlong remarked:

"My dear man, it's not part of our creed to avoid capital and corporation, is it?"

"N-no," replied MacDermott, "I suppose I'm too used to us as successful counsels for the plaintiffs before juries in accident cases against large corporations. But, of course, a man's practice changes; one can get on, professionally, and still be a friend of the plain people."

"I expect, on the platform, always to be antagonistic to greedy corporate power," said Furlong, firmly; "but still I think that I should like capital and labor both to see in me a friend. I should like to show them their mutual relations."

For a moment the words seemed childish to MacDermott. Then he glanced at Furlong's face, pale and fine, and pushed back the thought. Somehow, Furlong could make him feel the integrity of the "plain people" and of the whole nation, and of Furlong himself.

"I am always loyal to my sovereign, the American people," said Furlong, with his kindling smile.

"Well," said the disciple, with an affectionate glance, "if this company is all right, so much the better. It will be of some help to us if the factions of our dissipated party should by any chance combine to give you the nomination for governor. May the day come!"

"I've been thinking, Hugh, that a governor might make a good impression by using, among other things, those facts you found out two or three months ago—"

"About the money the Midland & Southern Railroad owes the State? Yes, I wonder why all the governors have let it go by default?"

Furlong laughed rather cynically.

"Some of them, let us hope, didn't know about it. But the State ought to have that money. Here's my train. I'll talk to you in the morning," he added, as he stepped on the rear platform. "Good-night."

MacDermott walked home slowly, his life unrolling like a long scroll before him. He was of use to the people in the ward he represented (and he reflected with a start that he must spend more nights over there than he had since his lady came), and the little club of boys in the ward needed him; he knew that he was the apple of Callahan's eye and that his work was indispensable to Furlong.

But to her? Oh, why could not some happy chance come —a deed to do, a gift to offer? Or would he go questing in vain, like the poor knight on the desolate plain, the lovely land of hope far behind him, and in front the gloomy castle where the lady called for help, but receded when he came near?

X

THE TWO LOVERS OF KILMANAN

IN a few days Moira was quite at home in her work with Mrs. Servan, who lived in a North Side hotel, where she had a suite of rooms filled with expensive and inexpressive furniture. Mrs. Servan disliked her way of living, but Mr. Servan preferred it until he could decide where he should build. Mrs. Servan confided to Moira that the site would not matter to her; she supposed she would make as many mistakes in grammar in one spot as in another.

It was settled that Mrs. Servan was to talk freely to Moira, and be corrected as she "went along." Mrs. Servan said frankly that she liked Moira; she could not like a backbiter or a cat, but there were a few people, some rich, some poor, whom she felt she could be herself with, and Moira was the chief of them. Moira liked her, too, but the feeling grew to be something warmer on the day that Mrs. Servan, with a flush on her poor freckled face, said she hoped Moira would never be fifty and childless, and afraid she was behind the times and never could catch up, and yet must learn new tricks to please her husband. That was the day upon which Moira decided that no matter how

interested she was in her own experience, she must ask as little as possible for herself, and care as much as possible for what people about her were trying to do with their experiences.

Meanwhile, MacDermott had been spending an unbroken week with Callahan, fresh from Kilmanan. The two sat side by side on the old hair-cloth sofa, talking of all Callahan was doing for the village. The little blue-papered sitting-room, with red geranium plants in the window (Mayme's gift), was always home to Hugh if Callahan was in it; and he was glad to know that, even if the wildest of his dreams came true, home would never be home if Callahan could not somehow share it. Callahan, too, disappointed as he had been that his boy had chosen to join forces with Furlong, knew that the old tie between them could never be sundered.

Just before MacDermott, fevered for a sight of his lady, returned to the South Side boarding-house, Callahan handed him a note from Moira. It asked if Callahan would call on her.

"Look at that, now," Callahan said; "can't you tell her all she wants to know?"

MacDermott read the note with reverence. He had never before seen her handwriting.

"No; I think you had better go," he said.

"Well, begor!" said Callahan; "I never called on a lady in my life."

He seized a handful of raisins, and ate them in throes of embarrassment at the thought of a call on the grand Miss Carew.

"Be jabers! I remember what a time I had with the old gentleman eight or nine years ago," he said.

"You'll never regret a call on Miss Carew," Hugh said; "besides, she wants you."

To Hugh that settled the matter.

"What time 'll I drop in?" asked Callahan, dismally. "I'll go to-night; I want to git it over. Will I have to go again? Does going once bind a man to repate it?"

"Not unless you want to," laughed Hugh.

"Well, mind you're there," warned Callahan.

"You may be sure either Furlong or I'll drop in later," said Hugh, half to himself.

"Furlong? What do I want of Furlong? Ain't you able to steer the talk without Furlong? Ain't you had as much experience with ladies as Furlong?"

"Not quite, but—"

"Well, keep Furlong out. If I got to be polite, I don't want Furlong disturbing me."

Hugh was sorry Furlong's name had come up. He knew that Callahan had an unwavering dislike for him. Callahan chose to believe that but for Furlong, Hugh would have been in his political camp.

"I shall come in later, Uncle John," he said; "but I think she'd rather ask you questions about Kilmanan without a third person by."

"All right," Callahan returned, gloomily.

He roared at Mrs. Haraghey to get him an early dinner. Then, at her defiant questioning, he broke down.

"I've got to call on a lady—"

"You'll not, then," said Mrs. Haraghey, her blue eyes ablaze. "If you think of bringing a wife home here—"

"Have conduct, woman," besought Callahan; "'tis that Miss Carew from the ould counthry. She have sent for me."

"Then 'tis your juty to go. Bring me back worrud what she looks like. Them Carews always have the figure light enough to dance on a fairy rath, and eyes like the sea they live by. 'Tis an honor entirely, John."

"'Tis because Hugh makes such a point of it," grumbled Callahan. "Have I some good, fresh linen, Mrs. Haraghey?"

"Oh, ah, does Hugh want it?" said Mrs. Haraghey, reflectively. "I'll lend you a bottle of perfume. You would be the betther of making a good impression. And don't ate raisins before her face."

Callahan arrived at the boarding-house at about eight. Mrs. Harker answered his ring and ushered him into the pink music-room, where half a dozen couples were talking and flirting. Callahan found a remote chair and surreptitiously ate raisins. Presently Moira came in, and advanced, smiling. He waited till she had almost reached him, and then he rose, put his silk hat firmly on the chair, and grasped her hand.

"Pleased to meet you, I'm sure," he said, hoarsely.

"It's Mr. Callahan, of course," she said. "So good of you to call. Won't you come this way?"

She led him into one of the little alcove-rooms, the occupants of the music-room following his burly figure with interest and watching the track of raisin-stones he shed.

"Here is a pleasant seat by the window," Moira said.

Callahan took it clumsily.

"Very pleasant weather we've been having," he said. "Don't know when we ever had less rain."

"It has been delight—"

But Callahan went on with the whole duty of man.

"Is this your first visit to Chicago? Are you enjoying it?"

"Very much; but won't you tell me how you enjoyed Kilmanan?" she said. "Of course you had been there before, but not as proprietor. I know you have been doing wonderful things for the village."

Kilmanan was, next to Hugh, the dearest thing in Callahan's world, and though he began his account ill at ease, the floodgate of his confidence was soon opened.

"Oh, sure, 'tis a great improvement I've made in the place, miss, saving your presence, though I'm sure, as it stood, it was as good as anny other village in Ireland, annyway."

"I know as well as any one how much needed to be done," Moira said.

Callahan pulled his chair an inch or two nearer her.

"Between you and me, miss, they just revel in dirt, the Irish. I had the great time learning how to manage them. At first I was hale fellow well met, but that didn't pay at all. Sure, then they thought they were doing me a favor when they borrowed money of me."

"How did you manage?" she asked, with laughing eyes.

"Exactly as I do in my warrd," he explained. "Hugh tells me you know politics? Well, then, I nade not tell you that a boss have got to be strict; he have got to keep things in his own hands, and the more he does that the stronger he is. You can't afford to let the byes think you're too easy; every favor you give must count, and you got to keep yourself a whole ladder-len'th above the man that asks the favor. Now, when I saw my sentiment for my own peo-

ple was spoiling my worrk, I threw it away, and used my warrd methods."

"And it was successful?"

"Was it successful?" he cried, moving his chair a little closer. "Why, my dear miss, it worrked to perfection."

"But could you keep the tenants from quarrelling among themselves after you made your organization?" she asked. "You know it is said that a fight inside the party is like a mutiny aboard ship; it lays you open to the enemy."

He looked at her appreciatively.

"You do know politics, miss. Well, now, the good reform people have a saying, 'The Cohesive Power of Public Plunder.' Well, I just showed them new tenants of mine how they could combine against every one else. As a matter of fact, I've started a dairy for them, and I've had them buy machinery on a communistic plan, and they're all getting rich."

Moira did not speak for a moment; then she said, in a low tone:

"I feel like thanking you for what you have done, Mr. Callahan. Of course they are not my people any more, but I had the will to help them, only not the means."

Callahan coughed in an embarrassed way; then he laughed and said:

"Well, I've made more people contented than ever I could if I'd kep' on in the coal business and learned to be a reformer."

"I appreciate your point, Mr. Callahan, though I am on the side of the reformers."

"Of course, being a lady," Callahan said, benevolently, "'tis the graceful thing, considering your bringing-up. But

let me warn you, miss, that this is America, and in this counthry all we love is money. You mark me; this is a land for living people. Every one in this counthry wants to get on; getting on means getting rich. Why else do the foreigners come, barring you, of course, miss? Well, now, as long as we love money as we do, these little spasms of reform and honesty aren't worth the powder to blow them up. They don't mean a cu—a thing."

This was a new view to Moira.

"Not but what," Callahan continued, with uplifted finger —"not but what them reformers can do some good to the people, and I suppose belaving in themselves does them a lot of good. But take our friend Furlong. When he was public prosecutor, what did he do? He got some indictments against the most notorious and least important members of the gang, and it stopped at that."

"It was a moral victory, nevertheless," pointed out Moira.

"Oh, it did him good, if you mane that," Callahan replied. "He got his little rewarrds and fireworks, but he didn't bag one rale captain of industhry—not one rale brainy law-breaker—just the stupid little go-betweens."

Moira's eyes were sparkling.

"But surely from all that we see written nowadays there's a great wave of reform over the land?" she said.

Callahan laughed.

"Sure, I thought we were talking of Kilmanan, and here you are turrning me inside out. Well, the papers have done it often enough. No, miss, 'tis this way: in politics you expect changes, and that's for the same reason you'd not walk too long in the same lane if you could thry two or three. They get tired of the same way, but they always

come back to the one that's most comfortable. Them that make a profession of politics know, just because it is their profession and they're specialized in it. Just as soon as we can show the people that reform's bad for business, off goes the head of reform."

"And you really, really believe it?" she exclaimed.

"Sure, yes, miss. Of course, everywhere, high and low, graft 'll get finer and finer, more—more—"

"More subtle?" she suggested.

"Yes, that's the worrd. It's as in the airly days when they killed a man by violence and run the chance of getting killed themselves; and then, when they'd learned more, they killed the man just the same, but covered up their thracks. Well, miss, 'tis a great game. There's only one other I like as well, and I'll do that when I'm too old and tired to keep my grip here."

"You mean managing Kilmanan?" she asked.

"Yes, just that. I want to make that a grand success so that Hugh won't have throuble with it when 'tis his."

"Mr.—Mr. MacDermott?" she exclaimed.

"Sure, who else, if he'll take it? I think he will. Hugh's a great reformer, but he's got the good hearrt, and he'd carry on a grand worrk like that."

His face softened.

"Ah, well, the young must choose," he said. "He's the grand bye, miss, and 'tis pitiful to see the little weak ways he thries to do good to the byes down in my warrd. Well, he does, but if he'd only take a few of my thousands—well, here he comes."

MacDermott's face lighted when he saw the two sitting comfortably together.

"Have you told Miss Carew all about Kilmanan, Uncle John?"

"Well, I've begun, but belike I'll have to make another trip to see her before I finish."

"I hope you will," said Moira, warmly.

"And if ever you feel like visiting my warrd, it 'd be proud Hugh 'd be to bring you," said Callahan, hospitably.

"I'm afraid Miss Carew—" began MacDermott.

"Ah, but I do want to come," Moira said.

"Then you'll see some poor Irish worse housed than in Kilmanan," said MacDermott, grimly.

"He doesn't mane 'tis my fault, miss," said Callahan, good-humoredly.

"It's the system—isn't that what one always says?" Moira asked MacDermott.

Callahan was struck by the expression on Hugh's face. He was about to go, but he stayed a little longer, watching; and when he did take his leave he knew where his boy's heart was.

"But about her?" he mused, as he walked to the train, thoughtfully consuming raisins. "I don't know does she care. 'Tis harrd to tell about a woman. But she's grand, and 'twould be a rale good way for her to get back Kilmanan without the mortgage."

XI

A SEASON PASSES, AND HUGH DECIDES TO LEAVE HIS LADY

JUST loving her should be enough, Hugh told himself; but it was not. Often when he was with her he was happy, and there were other hours when the fact that she was near was sufficient joy; but there were many times of unhappiness. When those about her wounded her susceptibilities, asked her impertinent questions, he felt it even more than Moira did. There were times, too, of grosser feeling when he was jealous of her interest in Furlong. For, as the spring and summer passed, that Furlong was growing in her esteem he could not fail to see. And though she was kind to Hugh, there was a detachment in her manner that she did not show when she talked to Furlong. The intimacy he had felt at first seemed withdrawn; he was not so much at ease with her as he had been.

"Are you happy here?" he asked her once, impulsively, when her eyes had the questioning look that always made his heart beat faster.

"I am very much interested," she said, after a pause. "More interested than I ever was, and more contented. There is more to engage one."

"Yes, but—"

"Don't you think," she said, with her wise smile, "that you Americans talk a great deal about being happy or not being happy? Now, at home, we just live, do you see, and do the thing nearest at hand."

"I see," murmured Hugh. "You think we talk too much about our own feelings? It's odd we have time for that with all the rest."

Her answer had left him ill at ease; frank as it was, it was simply an example, to his supersensitive and doubtless unjust soul, of the way she put him outside the inner circle where Furlong was admitted.

She seemed to give a place even to the other boarders. In the first weeks of her stay he had almost hated them, because they made too rough a foil for her. He had resented the bounding curves of Miss Broomer and Miss Gunn, their puffy black hair and loud laughter. The puns of Andrews and Gastman, culled from the comic weeklies, set him shuddering because she must hear them. Dickie Ames he permitted, because, evidently, Dickie amused her. Nobody could take the likable boy seriously, but it was impossible to find anything offensive in him; Dickie was able to idealize his own impertinences. The professor's diagrammatic talk of his travels bored him because he felt that it must bore Moira, and he would even have eliminated Miss Tower, because she was so dreary and moralizing.

"You have read the play 'Macbeth'?" she would ask. "It has such a good lesson. Whenever I find any of my pupils guilty of dishonesty, I say to her, 'Remember what deceit did for Macbeth.'"

"What makes you squirm so when the poor thing talks?" Mayme asked him once, rather indignantly. "Oh, you don't show it, but I know."

Mayme's perceptions, always keen, had grown keener as the spring and summer passed, because of her growing habit of analysis.

"'Course she's stupid," went on Mayme, "talking of any one who does her duty solid as 'laying down her life.' But that's better than being a selfish cat."

"Must a person be one or the other?" he asked.

Mayme's criticisms of his own conduct never failed to interest him, because they were usually just.

"I know the poor creature's story," said Mayme, in rather an embarrassed tone. "She was jilted at thirty-two—it's too old for such a blow, and she cared a good bit. Well, she's tried to make the best of her life by thinking of her duty, and that Providence had taken away the man because she wasn't worthy—stuff! I bet he married a fool. And now people find her tiresome, and she's twice as good as you or I."

"I never laugh at her, Mayme," he said, "and I promise you I'll never find her stupid again."

So his lady was benign in the life of others, too. Miss Tower was less diffident in venturing her poor little remarks, for there was always some one willing to listen to her and incapable of clipping her sentences short. Professor Satterly could not ignore Miss Tower any more, for he found out that if he did Miss Carew gently put aside the subject of travel. The young men, admiring Moira awkwardly, tried to interest her, and fumblingly sought subjects in the weather, flowers, or the theatre. Miss Gunn

was jealous of her, but she followed the lead of the stronger Miss Broomer.

And Mayme! First of all she came down with her pompadour reduced, and—

"Gee whiz!" murmured Miss Gunn. "Did you forget to curl it, or what?"

And next Miss Broomer took to softening her bold, bright stare. At first her efforts were disconcerting; she would be flashing a look on the table, and of a sudden she would quench it midway.

"What's the matter," Andrews would ask—"eyelids tired?"

The crowning proof of Mayme's advance, at least in concrete form, was manifested in her autumn gown. All summer long she had conscientiously read the best journals of fashion; she had gone to certain churches especially to see the clothes of ladies whom she judged from newspaper report to be well-bred. The result was that she came into the dining-room one Sunday for the mid-day meal in a dress subdued and graceful in line, quiet in coloring, and with just the proper amount of trimming. She walked in with a fair semblance of unconsciousness.

It was the cheerful custom of the boarders at Mrs. Harker's to fall back and gasp when one of their number appeared in a new gown. Not half a dozen people noticed that Mayme's dress was new, and she had progressed so far that she took that fact as a triumph.

Miss Gunn shot her a glance of scorn.

"If you think any gentleman 'll look at you in a rig like that," she said, cuttingly, "let me tell you you're fooling yourself."

She and Gastman discussed the subject after dinner.

"She hasn't made the most of her figure," said Gastman, critically, "and if a lady don't make the most of her figure, what's the use of it?"

"That's right," agreed Miss Gunn. "I tell you," she added, darkly, "Mayme's got something on her mind, that's what. She's getting so she don't care about her clothes, and that's a bad sign."

But lean Miss Tower, always sombre in her dressing, spoke to Mayme on the subject.

"May I tell you how much I like your gown, Miss Broomer? I often tell my pupils if only they would consent to be little girls, and dress more simply, what a lesson in simplicity it would be to the world."

"I'm glad you like it," Mayme said.

Dickie, too, was complimentary.

"I'd be willing to go to church with you anywhere, Mayme," he said. "Did *she* help you with the dress?"

"Who?" snapped Mayme.

"Oh, you know well enough—she who has all of us a squad of willing souls at her feet. She has made a lot out of you, my poor, raw, untutored Westerner."

"You're a cheeky young one," Mayme said, flushing.

Dickie put his hand on her arm.

"Forgive me, Mary; honest, I think you look fine. Say you'll forgive me and I'll present you with a little picture of her I've done from memory. I have two. I offered one to Hugh, but he wouldn't take it."

"I suppose because your painting was so bad?"

"Guess again, Mary. *She'd* know. My renewed compliments on that gown."

"Glad you like it," Mayme said, absently.

But what did *he* think? He had not taken her anywhere since Miss Carew had arrived—not even to places that didn't cost anything, not even walking. Whenever she stood or sat near him in the music-room he talked to her, but always, she felt, with a wandering eye for Miss Carew. At first Mayme kept away from him for a few days. Miss Gunn, however, remarked the fact. Mayme had replied easily that though they had known each other for a long time, they had never found each other indispensable; that she saw as much of him as ever, and as much as she wanted to. But thereafter she was careful not to let Hugh seem to neglect her.

On this special Sunday she knew he had looked on her with approval. Then he had quickly forgotten her, for Furlong called and joined Moira in the pink music-room. Hugh turned away, but presently Furlong appoached him. How hearty and attractive he looked, his fine face alight with a sense of power, his blue eyes full of humor and geniality!

"While Miss Carew goes up-stairs for her wraps (we're going walking)," he said, "I want to talk to you for a moment, Hugh. We were interrupted Friday, and I haven't had a minute since. About that People's Universal Light Company, now—"

MacDermott flushed, partly because, busy with his dreams of Moira, he had not thought of the matter since, and partly because he felt that he should have been thinking of it. Therefore, he spoke with more emphasis than usual.

"It was a sandbagging scheme, after all, wasn't it?"

"No, no," said Furlong, lowering his voice; "it did start out independently, and then it was genuinely merged into the other company, not bought out."

"Oh-h," said Hugh, slowly; "and the directors have gone over, too?"

"Most of them; Servan, for one."

"Marston's their attorney?" asked Hugh, suddenly.

"He was, but he's off to California for his health."

"Oh-h; and they've asked you?"

Furlong smiled brilliantly.

"They have; and I'm going to accept."

Hugh stared.

"Why, you said—"

Furlong frowned.

"I know what I said, my boy, but look here, I need the money; some of my personal affairs have gone wrong. I've promised to send my brother some thousands, too. If ever I get that nomination for governor, I'll need more money."

"Of course," Hugh said, slowly, "I know one has to compromise, but I do wish the company weren't so rotten."

"You see," explained Furlong, using his feudal tone, "I've proved to the people by the bills I've put through the House and the Senate that I'm their friend. There's no doubt of that, and there's no doubt that I stand for reform. My external reputation is solid. I don't think any one can make much capital against this name of mine. I've never put myself on record as being against corporations, unless they were robbing the people."

Hugh hesitated.

"Means to an end," said Furlong; "you know where my

real interest lies. I will always work for the cause, but—well, my boy, I sometimes think you forget what a good servant expediency can be."

Hugh did not doubt his hero.

"I suppose it's a question between you and your principles," he said, "and I know how strong they are."

Moira had been slowly approaching, dressed for the street. Hugh bowed, and as they passed toward the door he took a seat where he could watch them walking toward the lake.

It was late autumn, and the bare trees looked lank and cold under a gloomy sky. Passers-by shivered and hurried. His lady's black gown was in dreary harmony with the day, and her face, too, seemed sad. She was not always happy in her new land. He did not know that Moira was distressed about her sister. Ida's first letters after her marriage had been complacent, but later her tone had changed. There was trouble about money matters; Cousin Walter had certainly been very careless in arranging the settlements, she complained. He had not found out that Sir Arthur was very deeply in debt. His estate was not entailed, and he had been able to mortgage it rather heavily. Besides his pay there was less than two hundred pounds a year. Now a baby was expected, and she wrote of illness and debts and bickerings. On every page she wailed that she would have waited if Cousin Rose had not been so pressing—she might have made so much better a match if she had waited—she wished she had never left Kilmanan.

MacDermott only knew that he could do nothing for his lady. Long ago he had decided that he must never tell her, and all summer he had been wondering if he had not

better leave her. If he dropped out of her life she would scarcely miss him, so far apart were they thrust by her indifference. For his own sake he must go. This passive, watching life was intolerable. He knew how a captive knight must feel, looking down from his tall tower to see other men rendering service to his lady.

Yes, he would go; he would not only never tell his lady, but soon he would drop noiselessly out of her life.

XII

HOW HUGH LEFT HIS LADY

WHEN MacDermott turned away at last from the window, his vagrant gaze over the pink music-room encountered Mayme sitting with a book. He remembered, with a start, that he had not talked with her for some time. She looked up with a welcoming smile as he approached her.

"What is the book, Mayme?" he asked.

"It's the one Miss Carew lent me—a novel. You despise them, don't you?"

He sat down beside her.

"I've not seen very much of you lately, Mayme."

She was about to retort pertly that it wasn't her fault—he knew where to find her; but, instead, she said, quite amiably, that she supposed he had been busy, and that she had noticed that he had been spending a good many of his days and nights on the West Side.

"Yes," he assented, "and I've put in a good deal of time going for walks by myself."

"I thought some of going for a walk to-day," Mayme said, tentatively.

Hugh made no response, and she added:

"But then so many people go walking on Sundays it makes it too common."

He smiled at her.

"You always did like preferred stock, so to speak, Mayme."

"Oh, I don't know," she replied.

"That's a very pretty dress. I know you well enough to compliment you on your taste, don't I?"

"Well, I should hope so," she returned, a glow at her heart. "I picked the style myself, Hugh; didn't just let the dressmaker do it, as Mrs. Servan does."

"You're a progressive American, aren't you, Mayme?" he asked.

Mayme was generous.

"Well, I know who I have to thank," she said, "and that's Miss Carew. She's all right, Hugh."

He lost himself in a vision. He did not know how long he was silent, nor how his silence hurt Mayme. He saw again a knight, with a fringe of sere forest behind him, torn and dead, without the green and gold of hope there. The knight plodded a slow way along a dreary road, and a menacing morass ate at its edges; and far away on the wall of the enchanted castle stood his lady, not a little sister to a page, but the princess of all the world. Her slim hands shaded her eyes, but she was not looking for him; and when he came near she waved him away, and the enchanted palace slipped to a distant forest, green and gold, and not for him.

It was a frequent visitor now, this unwelcome vision.

"She's rare," he said, at last.

Mayme was human, if generous, and she said:

"Some folks in the house here think she and Furlong 'll make a match of it. Mrs. Harker is real interested in it, if a person 'd let her talk."

Having taken her revenge, Mayme hurried on to topics which she thought might keep him by her side, and she had the satisfaction of knowing that Miss Gunn and Gastman, from one of the little alcove-rooms, saw them together all the afternoon.

Hugh's sore heart eased a little as they talked. Mayme was wholesome and sympathetic; he always felt a sense of reliance on her friendship. She was like Callahan, a tie with the old past when his dreams were all real and could not hurt. Moira took strength from him and Mayme gave to him. While he did not so phrase his feeling, he knew that he was glad to be with his old friend, and felt sorry that inclination for her society did not come oftener nowadays. But when Moira entered with Furlong all his heart went out to meet her, and he had much ado to show an attentive face to Mayme.

Mayme looked her best at supper that night. Her spirits were high, and once or twice she let them carry her so far as to forget her recent progress in the fine art of culture. Yet a quick look at Hugh and Moira showed that each seemed preoccupied. Mayme counted a black mark against herself, breathed freely, and went on with her chatter. She pointed out to the table that Mrs. Harker was making the rounds of the larger dining-room.

"Just see her," she said, rather loudly; "she says something, then there's a hubbub and more talking. What *is* the fracas all about?"

She made various brilliant speculations, to the great edifi-

cation of Andrews; Gastman, too, applauded so much that Miss Gunn felt called on to repress him.

At last Mrs. Harker approached their table, her business-like face set in regretful lines. Her tones showed that she was enjoying herself extremely.

"My dear friends," she said, "I have an announcement to make. My plans are such that I am giving up this establishment, which will be taken over by a very competent lady, and I am to take another establishment on the North Side. It will be very high-toned—so is this, of course—but the one on the North Side will be expensive—not less than fifteen dollars a week. But if any of you would care to come with me—"

Andrews and Gastman groaned. Andrews clutched Mayme's arm, and sang, softly:

> "'Ah, leave me not, dear heart;
> I did not dream that we should part.'"

Mrs. Harker permitted the interruption with an indulgent smile.

"It is over on Ritchie Place," she said, "a few doors from millionaire Servan's new mansion—"

"Too far away from my business," chorused Andrews and Gastman.

"Too dear for me," said Miss Gunn, frankly.

Dickie clasped his hands with a feverish sigh.

"Speak! Does Jenkens go?"

Mrs. Harker glanced at the impassive Jenkens behind Moira's chair.

"I believe," she said, in an injured tone, and with a sour glance at Moira, "that he is to buttle for the Servans."

"And does my own MacDermott go?" went on Dickie, turning to his friend. "If so, Mrs. Harker, I will never cease from following after you."

"La, Mr. Ames, how you do run on!" said Mrs. Harker.

Mayme had been thinking quickly. She had heard Servan talk of his new house on Ritchie Place, and he had said that Furlong boarded in a small hotel in the same block; that must be the place Mrs. Harker was taking. Moira would be with Mrs. Servan, but surely Hugh would go to the hotel to be near her. So, with a shudder for her purse-strings, she said:

"Well, you can count on my going with you, Mrs. Harker. I know when I'm well off, and I like the North Side, anyhow."

MacDermott had been thinking, too. Here was his chance to separate from his lady. He knew that Furlong and the Servans were to be neighbors. Furlong could be always at Moira's elbow. So much the better. If she and Furlong did love each other, or were to love each other, he would step aside entirely; he did not want to see their course of love run on under his unhappy eyes. Here was his great chance: she would go away; he would think of her as a lovely dream, would forget that she had been flesh and blood, that her eyes were hazel and the palms of her hands very pink, and that a half-flush came suddenly on her cheek when Furlong made her think of all there was to do in the world. Once more she should be a dim lady of dreams, some one who would point him to what might become real in another world. He would let her leave him—now was his chance—he would not speak; he would let Mrs. Harker see that he was not to be among her new boarders—and so he said:

"I shall be very glad to go with you, Mrs. Harker."

Mrs. Harker waited a moment.

"Well," she said, reluctantly, "three is more than I could expect. I am sure Miss Broomer and Mr. MacDermott and Mr. Ames will be company for each other in the new house. Well, I'll go, and let you finish your suppers."

Mayme's heart was singing.

"Furlong right close by!" she thought. "Well, I do fall on my feet sometimes. I always was thankful even for a fighting chance."

To Mayme the land of the living was a place of stress and strain, of getting on in the eyes of men and in one's own eyes, of doing something which the world would applaud. Lately, she had conceived the idea of being something, whether the world could know or not.

Dickie Ames was beside Moira as soon as Jenkens had withdrawn her chair.

"Gee, but I'm glad you're going to be near me!" he said.

"And I'm glad, too," she replied.

"Do you expect to find romance in the new place? Let's let the others go on ahead."

They stood against the wall, while the others filed into the music-room to discuss the news, MacDermott rather lingering.

"I shall be glad to meet new ladies," said Dickie, "though, my heart being yours, I can only welcome myself among them, not congratulate them. But I want to live among a few women that are not earning their own living, but are just left over to make life agreeable for us men."

"I am looking for romance as a wage-earner," Moira reminded him.

Dickie blushed.

"You force me to say that all categories include you. Another reason why I want to live over there is Furlong. I've something to bat him with now. Congratulate me; don't you notice my swelling bosom?"

"Not particularly. Have you taken a prize at the Art Institute? And what has that to do with Mr. Furlong?"

"My sister—she lives in New York—has consented to let our property be sold. And MacDermott and Furlong will make the partition (you knew they were my business pastors and masters, didn't you?), and then I'll have ready money, and when I'm of age the firm will have to let me invest some of it the way I like. Besides that, he'll have to give me money to go to Paris and study art—unless you'll share my thousands here?"

"You'd better beg Mr. Furlong never to let you have your own money," Moira advised.

"Well, if brother Furlong tries to keep his mitts on my gold, I can get it out of Hugh," Dickie said. "My peculiar papa left a lot of loose bonds in care of the firm, but whenever I go to Brer Furlong with a grand scheme for investment he turns me down with a bland smile. Now, what have I said that you should turn away the light of your countenance?"

"We can't stand here any longer without inconveniencing the maids," Moira said; "besides, Mrs. Harker wants to speak to us."

Mrs. Harker was poking her head out of a door leading to the kitchen, obviously wanting to be congratulated. When Moira said she hoped she would like her new venture, Mrs. Harker's face lost its strained smile.

"Well, I d' know," she said; "I was over there yesterday and to-day, meeting the guests, and that. The lady I'm partners with and I don't look at things the same way, but I'm in it, and I'll have to make the best of it. I d' know as I like the boarders so well as these here."

"I'm sure you will," Moira said.

"Well," returned Mrs. Harker, "this morning I spoke to a lady that's just come to board, and I said to her, what I always do, to make herself at home, and to count herself one of a large family. And what d'ye think she did? She put up her spy-glass, and says she, 'My good creature, I don't care to enlarge my family,' and she changed her seat. Now, what d'ye think of that?"

"The style is different on the North Side," suggested Dickie.

"That's what the lady I'm partners with said," complained Mrs. Harker. "She said our relations with our boarders must be purely business. Well, I like to be friendly with people, I do. Just as soon as people get a little money they get so stuck up! There's Miss Broomer, she never talks to me about her beaux any more—says it's vulgar. I guess she's afraid I'd tell, but I never have."

Dickie giggled and then bolted into the music-room to tell about the lady with the lorgnette. Moira went up to her own room to write to Ida.

There was much hubbub of talk in the music-room that night. Miss Carew and Miss Broomer were regarded with a kind of jealous attention as people going up in the world and leaving others equally deserving behind. Miss Gunn openly remarked to Mayme that the latter would never again look at her friends in the six-dollar-a-week boarding-

house. She added mentally, however, that she herself would have the advantage of both Gastman and Andrews.

MacDermott looked about on the fat furniture and crude pink walls, against which the boarders stood out in too emphatic outlines, and wondered how his lady would like life in a larger world. She knew now the world of bookkeepers, secretaries, stenographers, teachers, and small business people. She would be eager for her new adventure. He fancied that the only person she would regret leaving would be Miss Tower, and that because she was one of the rare pleasures the poor woman had.

And so, in spite of his resolution, he was going with his lady.

"Where's my backbone?" he asked himself, feeling at his spine with a lame attempt at jocularity. "Funny; reminds me of the days when Uncle John used to offer me the last piece of cake on the dish, and I'd stretch out my hand for it at the moment when I said, 'Oh no, Uncle John; you take it.'"

But MacDermott's sense of humor was coy, and he went back to his serious brooding. He was going to be near Moira, and she had not even said she was glad, though she had welcomed little Dickie Ames. He was too weak not to stay near her, not to see her dear face as long as he could. He would give up all thought of being of use to her; even that was a wild hope. But he would ask of life at least this much: to be where he could see her and sometimes talk with her.

He sat long in his room with his two dream pictures of her in his hand. "Ecce Ancilla Domini!" it was not half so spiritual and lovely as she. It was better to shut his

eyes and see her real face. At the end of his long vigil he said:

"I may go on living beside her, but I must never, never hope to tell her."

Of a sudden, in all the sharpness of reality, he saw Callahan's kind, big face with a waiting look in the eyes. It was like a shock. Hugh put down the pictures and held out his arms in the darkness, like a child with a half sob.

"Uncle John—there's no one like you; I'll go home to you."

That was the first victory of Callahan's great heart over the white principles of Sir Galahad. Not Furlong, not even Moira, counted for the moment against the comforting love of the big boss.

XIII

HOW HUGH KEPT HIS PROMISE

IT was a great event for Callahan and Mrs. Haraghey when MacDermott came back to live with them. The day that Moira went to the Servans' new house he telephoned that his trunk would arrive in the afternoon. Mrs. Haraghey spent the day scrubbing and cooking, and when he came home for dinner she would hardly allow him to take off his hat before she plumped him down to the table. Callahan sat opposite him in his shirt-sleeves and pretended to look at the evening paper.

"Do the best I could wid him," said Mrs. Haraghey, exasperated, "I couldn't get John to put on his coat for ye."

"Why should he?" asked MacDermott.

"Why should he? And you comin' back to give us the length and breadth of yourself afther consortin' with the quality, too!"

At the reference to Moira, MacDermott's eyes dropped.

"But," said Mrs. Haraghey, indignantly, "though he ates away there like a Kerry cow, afraid to look up for fear of losin' the bite, 'tis him is glad to see you."

"Are you, Uncle John?" asked MacDermott, whimsically.

"I can put up with it," said Callahan; "and besides, 'tis a good thing for the warrd. The best element—for I belave that is what you represent—doesn't like to see its representative living so manny days a week on the South Side among the silk stockings. We're a touchy lot here. They'll welcome you back with all their veins, Hugh."

"Ah, yes; ah, yes; it would be a heavy lead and a long line that would get to the bottom of the heart's love of this warrd for you," said Mrs. Haraghey, whose people had been fisherfolk. "But," she added, "you'll never be the man your uncle John is. You'll do well to be said and led by his example."

"Here endeth the first lesson," said Callahan. "Pass the cabbage."

After dinner Callahan got his pipe, and said, casually, to MacDermott:

"You'll be stepping out, I suppose?"

"I was thinking of having a smoke with you, and then turning in," said MacDermott.

When he had gone to bed, Mrs. Haraghey remarked, musingly:

"Ah, well; maybe there's nawthin' in it, at all at all."

Callahan made no reply, and she went on:

"But 'tis said 'tis well to neglect a gurrl a night or two now and thin; she gits too much raised up in herself wid the attention—"

Callahan puffed away, and she asked:

"Why don't you tell me what you think, man?"

To which he replied:

"How can I when I don't understand what you're discoursing of?"

When several nights passed and MacDermott did not leave the house, Mrs. Haraghey began to fume.

"The weary on him!" she said. "What does he mane at all, neglectin' her? 'Tis I that washed his things twice in the week for him. And haven't I seen him, night afther night, when I chanced to look through the crack as I passed his dure, standin' befure his glass tryin' tie afther tie, and then throwin' them all by. That meant he was goin' to see her, and hadn't the stren'th to do it, afther all. Or maybe he feels she's too good for him, and won't say the worrd."

Then Callahan said, crisply:

"There's no woman too good for my bye. He's the kind, if he was in Ireland, to break the hearts of the gurls, and the heads of the men and the backs of the horses—and he with the village of Kilmanan some day."

"If that's the case, thin he's got butthermilk for blood in him," said Mrs. Haraghey. "I wonder at him."

MacDermott wondered at himself. He longed to see his lady, and yet he knew that he would be speechless if he did stand before her. He had once been the best young fighter in Callahan's ward, had never been known to refuse a dare, and had always to be dragged by Callahan out of any place of special danger. And yet he did not see how any one could walk up to Moira as Furlong did and talk with full confidence.

One evening, to the undisguised relief of Mrs. Haraghey, he left the house. He walked through the crowded, sordid streets of his ward to the quiet little corner of the rich where the Servans' new house stood. Furlong had run in with the air of one who was practising a familiar habit, but Hugh

judged from his attitude that he did not intend to stay long. Moira smiled on MacDermott and gave him her hand; then he sat by Mrs. Servan, who tried on him the grammar and small talk she had picked up from Moira.

"You are still immensely interested in life on this side of the city?" MacDermott heard Furlong ask Moira.

"Oh yes," she replied; "coming to this new place reminds me that there are plenty of things waiting round the corner of to-morrow."

"There's plenty going on, certainly, but if you want to see things happen you must go out into the world of business. People see most by coming into some relation of pull and haul, a relation of activity toward a great number of people."

"Yes, I suppose the mere ordinary social relations are nothing in comparison, but still they interest me."

Moira's freshness of interest was a delight to Furlong, already growing jaded with the long custom of his duties and beliefs. It struck him that she kept the freshness because she expected little for herself.

"Does every day bring you something worth while?" he asked.

"Yes; a new sensation is left on the door-step of my mind every day, like the milk."

MacDermott heard them as he mechanically answered Mrs. Servan's questions. Why did his lady never turn such a face to him? Why could not he talk to her as Furlong did? Why could not he have that assured sense of being welcome? To his self-given manes of "stoat-in-bottle" and "idiot" he added "nincompoop." He asked himself amazedly if he was the man who had that very day pleaded

a case so brilliantly that the listeners had applauded till the judge had threatened to clear the court? Was he the man who had heard an important lawyer say, "If that young man MacDermott is ever in a case against me, we'll consider settling out of court?"

No, he must never tell his lady that he loved her, but at least he might send his spirit marching up to hers, so to speak, to demand friendship. Inactivity maddened him; why should he let her take his real self away and leave this poor shadow of a man who loved too well?

Mrs. Servan was never stupid where her heart was concerned. She followed MacDermott's straying attention, and said:

"Miss Carew is a lovely girl, isn't she? I wish she were my daughter."

"That is the highest compliment that can be paid a girl, isn't it?" he said.

He looked at Moira again. How far apart they were—all the deserts of the world between them; no, he must never tell her. At the moment she leaned forward and said:

"Mr. Furlong and I are conspiring against you."

"Miss Carew remembers the promise we made months ago that she should hear some political speaking. There is to be some at the stock-yards to-night, but I can't be there during the first part of the evening—"

"And may I take you?" Hugh asked.

"If you will be so good. Mr. Furlong thinks we should start immediately," she said, rising.

He felt a rush of gratitude toward Furlong, though he might have reflected that as Furlong could not take Moira himself he lost nothing by supplying Hugh as an escort.

Moreover, Furlong himself was to speak. Hugh wanted to drive but Moira objected that if they did they should lose the early speeches. It was with an effort that he kept in mind the fact that the speeches were her object. He preferred the feeling that the gods had put by their concerns for a season to make a half-god of him. He must never tell her, but just for a magical half-hour he was to be back in the world of enchantment with her, quite alone, as they had once been in Kilmanan orchard.

Street-cars, suburban trains, street-cars again; well-dressed people, middle-class people, workmen—they were all as trees walking to Hugh, because her eyes and her voice were making him a radiant musical golden maze, and how could he look beyond?

"Who are these workmen?" asked Moira, as they neared their destination.

"The people we are trying to educate for our reform ticket," he told her.

He and Furlong had both talked to her of the chance that Furlong would receive the nomination as governor. Moira had followed with eagerness the trail of his political efforts while yet it was only whispered that he had any chance. Scarcely a week passed that his name was not mentioned in the newspapers in some public affair. She knew that his following was stronger than the public supposed.

At Ashland Avenue they got off the car and went into a rickety old hall blue with smoke. MacDermott took Moira to the gallery, and she looked down on a multitude of unkempt heads and collarless red necks and slouching shoulders. Every few minutes some one would strike a match and bow his head to light his pipe; then the yellow spurt of

flame would show a dark, unshaven cheek or a crude profile. MacDermott would have liked to quench all the pipes and turn out the rough audience.

"This is no place for you," he said.

Moira only laughed.

"It's all part of my democratic training. Who is the speaker, and what is he talking about?"

A squat, dark man had just stepped upon the platform and was drinking a glass of water preparatory to making a speech.

"That's Paddy O'Day; he wants to be alderman. You can expect direct speech from him."

"I'm Paddy O'Day," announced the speaker. "I want your votes. Why? I need the money, and it 'll pay you to have me. Why? I'll get you out of jail; I'll fix your taxes. The man that's in office now can't and won't. Why? I'll tell you. You want something; you go to his house opposite the park. You ring. A woman in swell clothes comes to the door with a silver tray. Is there a free lunch on it? No; she wants your card. You tell her you want the alderman. She says he ain't up yet, and you can go over to the park and rest yourself. Not a foot does she let you in the house.

"You go over to the park and wait and wait. By-and-by out he comes and goes horseback-ridin'. You can set there all day for all he cares. Will he let you in on his fine carpets? No; but you can come in my house by the front door with your shoes all dirt from the stock-yards. You won't hurt my carpets, for there ain't any carpets."

Moira turned an amazed face to MacDermott.

"He'll be elected, too," he whispered.

While O'Day was still speaking, Furlong came upon the platform, greeted by a round of applause. He shook hands with those nearest him.

"Some of those fellows on the platform have never met Furlong," MacDermott whispered, "but they speak of him by his Christian name. 'Now, you must ask Henry about this,' they say to me. Our simple democracy."

"Do they forgive you for being better dressed and better educated?" she asked.

"O'Day saw me at some public reception in a dress suit. He walked around me critically, and then said, 'Say, Hugh, you look real good in them clothes; I'd wear 'em again; why shouldn't you?'"

She cut short her reply because the chairman began to introduce Furlong. She had never heard Furlong speak, and she watched and listened closely. He rose easily, and spoke almost without gesture, for he had toned down his style of oratory since the old days. His sudden smile gave him the animation which gesture usually supplies to most speeches; his voice was deep and of good range. The stories he told were clever and simple both. Moira was delighted with the way he made his talk familiar without making it common.

"No wonder you admire him," she said, enthusiastically, to Hugh, when Furlong sat down.

Furlong had seen them, but as he was obliged to appear at another meeting, he did not have time to speak to them. When he had gone, they listened to one or two more speeches, and then Moira suggested that it was growing late.

"Mayn't we drive home?" he asked. "The cars are so uncomfortable—"

He waited breathlessly for her reply. Could it be that his magical hour was to come again; that within the four walls of a cab he should find again his golden musical world?

"I am rather tired," she confessed.

He left her in a little corner drug store. When he returned her eyes were reflective, and he knew she was think- of Furlong. But what of that? Still it was his hour, though he must never, never tell her.

They drove in silence for a time. He was thrilled with the sense of her nearness. If only the ride could last forever; if he need never go down to his office again, never plead another case, never see any face but hers; just sit there watching her delicate, strong profile, hearing her voice occasionally, perhaps thinking of the old orchard in which he had seen her first.

She turned to look at him. Even in the dim light she could see how worn and tired his face was. She thought of his devotion to Furlong, and reflected that it must cost him a good deal of time and effort.

"You are living an ideal, surely, Mr. MacDermott," she said, voicing her thought. "You've found out what you believe and are following that unswervingly. That is what I used to think it was easy to do; now I know it's hard."

It was one of the few times she had spoken to him about herself.

"I simply jog on, I suppose," he said; "there are so many ways of jogging."

They fell into silence. Suddenly she said to him, with a little laugh:

"Of what are you thinking?"

Of what was he thinking? Of his dream, of the sweet reality of her presence, of the wild pretence that for the moment she was his; of all the wonderful visions of her that had crowded on him for years, making him a world more real than the world of the streets and law-offices where other men and women found him. The dreams in their richness and wild beauty pressed on him, mocking, poignant visions, and out of his sheer madness he told her the truth.

"I am thinking how much I love you."

XIV

THE DREAM FAILS

HE did not speak, and presently he began to wonder if he had really said the words or only thought them. He turned quickly, and her puzzled, distressed face showed him that he had spoken.

"You must forgive me," he said. "I never meant to tell you. I know there is no hope. I think I want nothing, except just to be allowed to love you—and, yes—I don't want you to forget me. I want to do something—make some record that will keep me in your mind."

Still she said nothing.

"That isn't quite true," he added, quickly. "I do hope for more. I want you to know that I love you. Perhaps you won't let me tell you, but I'd like to have you remember —yes, even if it had to be in spite of yourself."

Then Moira said, breathlessly:

"I'm so sorry—so sorry—"

"Don't be sorry," he said, with a little break in his voice. "I've loved you all my life. I've got a diary that I've been keeping ever since I saw you in Kilmanan. If you could read that you would know how long and how well I have loved you."

"I'm so sorry," she repeated.

"Not if you knew how you have made the world full of magical and beautiful things for me. Only—only, don't take away the little I have."

Moira's heart thrilled with pity. She wondered if he realized how little that was. She liked him, but she was hardly aware of him. He was a background figure in her life, as much so as Miss Broomer, far more than Mrs. Servan. She could not but know his gentleness, his consideration for her. But perhaps he had been too gentle; certainly he had never counted to her. He must be a man of force if all that Furlong and Callahan and Servan said of him were true; but MacDermott had been too true a lover; he had made her indispensable to him, but he had not made himself indispensable to her.

"Don't let me see less of you than I have," he begged, "though that's been little enough. All I ever seem to do is look at you and stand aside. But I must keep you as you have always been—my dream-lady. I don't want to feel that all the lovely impossible things in my life have happened—that there is nothing but blackness ahead—"

"Oh, if this had not happened!" she murmured.

"Ah, don't say that; if you only knew how you have helped me! Just thinking of the gentle way you say things drives the pain from my head; it's like cool water. If I haven't lost my place in your regard—"

"No, no; you haven't," she hastened to say.

Here he was pouring out his poet-soul, this quiet young man who had loved her so long, and above them the cabman clicked to his horse mechanically, and people outside in the wind-swept streets went their unheeding ways. She

had never liked him so well, never been so thoroughly aware of him as now when she pitied him so utterly. But he read her.

"I know how little I count with you," he said, "and yet my thoughts go to you for comfort. It's almost a presumption. I wonder why I've told you? I think it must be that though I tell you I ask for almost nothing, yet I do ask for the right to pour out all this love—this once. If a man has a little of his heart's desire, the terrible world has no power over him."

Moira's dreams of love had been few; there was an essential shyness about her which she encouraged. Her fleeting visions of love had been simple and shamefaced as a young girl's. But she had hoped to love one day. She had never been loved before; she had supposed that only the man she could love would love her.

"I don't know what to say," she murmured. "No one has ever loved me."

"Ah, all the world loves you, only you're the ideal, and they can't reach you."

He told her haltingly of how she had always been in his dreams, of the aims she had kept pure and steady. Moira was touched and shaken. When he had first spoken, her one desire had been to leave him, but now she felt that she owed something to such a great and unseeking love.

"That I could do so much!" she said.

"I suppose men work to have more mental life and pray for more soul life," he said; "but my thought of you helped me to both. I have been at peace in my dreams of you."

"But I could wish it had been some other woman," she said, pained. "Some one that—so you might have re-

alized your ideal. I should like you to have what you want."

"I know," he returned; "you are telling me that you cannot love me. But I have known that ever since I saw you at Kilmanan."

"Oh, it is not because—" she began.

"Not because I was born a peasant? Ah, you need not tell me that. I know your soul, I think. Are you sorry I have told you?"

"How can I tell?" she asked, distressed. "If it has given you any happiness—no. My own pain is selfish. I don't like to cost any person any suffering whatever. And—and I want to be free—"

"I understand," he said, after a pause, "it is too much of a responsibility to have a naked soul defenceless before you."

"How you have read me!" she cried.

"Think how tenderly I have studied every least line of your face. But I have never let any of your thoughts of me hurt me," he added, hastily.

She was silent, uncomfortable.

"I have tried not to know you better than you wanted any one to," he said. "Perhaps I haven't always known what the best loyalty was—"

Tears rose to Moira's eyes. She felt as if no one would ever love her so well, so delicately, and she wished she had appreciated him as he deserved. Yet her reflection and feelings were curiously detached; all her pity could not give her a thrill of more intimate feeling.

"I hope I'm not making you unhappy," he said. "This has given me so much—so much more than I've ever had. You know, in all my life I've never had what I wanted;

and to have you like this, listening to me so gently—that is a happiness that I cannot lose."

"It's beautiful," she said. "I mean, the way you have let it count for so much."

"You see, loving you has taught me a great deal," he replied. "I know what it takes people all their lives to learn. You see, we are born with a passion for activity—the passion to conquer foreign fields, to blaze strange paths, to build mighty bridges—and at the end of our lives we learn that passion is not wisdom, and then we speak of pain and mystery. Just loving you has given me so much experience that I can be—well, spiritually frugal, can make all my happiness count."

At the moment she wished she loved him. Two hours before he had not counted in her world. Had he gone away she would have missed him—and that would have surprised her—but she would not really have regretted him. And now, it was largely her kindness of heart that made her wish she could care, that he might not be hurt. But more than that, there was a worship for such great and rare love, a sense of pity that it must be lost, an unconfessed fear that such a love could not come to the same woman twice.

The long ride ended. Silently he walked beside her into the house, and silently they stood together at the door while he fumbled with the latch-key. He remembered, suddenly, how she had shut the door upon him at Kilmanan; he told her of that as they entered the hall.

"You will not shut the door on me now?" he asked.

"No; I forgot you as soon as the gate was closed, then," she said. "Now I can't ever forget. The first love that

is offered a woman—she can't forget that. She can't forget if it is a man's first love. No, we shall be better friends for this, Mr. MacDermott, even though we mustn't speak of it again. Good-night."

She held out her hand. He wanted to kiss it. He knew every line of her long, tapering fingers and the round, even wrist. It took a thousand years of noble breeding to make a wrist turned like that, he thought. But he scarcely touched it.

"Good-night," he whispered.

He watched her as she walked up-stairs. There are very few women who can stand such a test, but she mounted with slow grace. Her head was bent a little. To this odd mingling of excited joy and pain there was added a feeling of pride that he had at last power to make her think of him.

Moira was thinking of him with distress. She was accustomed to self-denial and deprivation, but she had never before been obliged to deny another creature any gift. True, she had given him no right to ask; indeed, he had claimed no right. But her own spirit was as noble as his; she wanted to be generous, too. Yet other feelings conflicted with these; she resented that she should be loved where she could not love. Moira's feelings were not usually complex, and her distress, from being emotional, soon became intellectual, with the result that her attitude of detachment toward MacDermott was intensified. But her sense of justice intervened, and before she slept she resolved to be very, very kind to him.

Meanwhile, Hugh was walking sordid, quiet streets. Most of the houses were solitary and dark; here and there a light

shone; a policeman paced up and down. He looked up at the eternal skies; no one could ever take away his dreams, and even if she had been lost to him from the beginning, at least he was nearer her than he had ever been. The golden, magical world they had both shared for a space was gone, the radiant memory of it nothing could take away.

The next morning when Callahan awoke and tiptoed into the kitchen an hour before breakfast, he found Mrs. Haraghey there brewing herself a hugh bowl of tea.

"What is it at all, woman?" he asked. "The eyes of you look as if you hadn't slept."

"Nor would you," she said, with a break in her voice, "had you heard Hugh creakin' all night long in his bed, tossin' over and over. I misdoubt, Callahan, 'tis black weather wid the lad."

"Ah, then, 'tis your indigestion on you again," said Callahan, crossly. "This comes of killing so much fatted calf for the bye all week. You couldn't have celebrated harder if he'd just come out of the Bridewell. 'Tis you 'll feel better after you have had your tea."

XV

CALLAHAN SEES PEOPLE

THAT afternoon Moira asked Mrs. Servan to excuse her early from her duties. She was going on a mission to Callahan. She shuddered as she rode in the packed street-car through the heart of the crowded ward in which MacDermott had been brought up. She walked through some of the dreadful grimy streets that he used to fill with castles and forests and knights, shrinking, despite herself, from the wretched humanity spawning in every hole and corner. And yet that place could produce a man like MacDermott!

Callahan's little office gave on the street with a broad, curtainless window so that the world might look in and see how above-board were his transactions. He was sitting in his shirt-sleeves as Moira walked up to the door, and his face was pink with the exertion of getting into his coat by the time he admitted her. Two of his heelers slunk out as she went into the office, and Callahan noticed them no more than if they had been flies on the window.

"Well, if this ain't the honor!" he said. "Sure, miss, I've been feeling as if you might come, but I expected Hugh would bring you."

"No; to tell the truth, I want to talk to you about him."

"Well, do sit down, miss." He dusted a chair for her, and she was reminded of the old peasant women in Kilmanan.

She sat down, hesitating for words.

"It's very unconventional—all this," she began.

"Sure, miss, whatever a Carew does is right. I was brought up to belave that," he said.

"It is this: I have heard that Judge Carley of the juvenile court is talking of resigning—"

"Sure, he talks periodical, miss, on account of his health, but he can't get out of his rut."

"Oh," said Moira, disappointed, "I thought perhaps Mr. MacDermott might be a candidate for the judgeship. He is so fond of poor children and, I understand, has done a great deal for the boys in this ward—"

"To think I never thought of it!" said Callahan, admiringly. "But are you sure he'd want it, s'posing Carley should resign some time?"

"He hasn't said so, but—but something makes me think he'd be happiest in that kind of usefulness."

Callahan was pleased—why should she ask this if Hugh's happiness wasn't a good deal to her? He gloated over the thought for a moment, and then he laughed.

"Well, miss, I notice when you want a thing like this you don't go to the reformers for it; you come to me."

She smiled.

"I come to you to know if it is practicable. Of course, I rely on the reformers to get him in."

"Well, I'll set my own poor strings at worrk, too," he said; "there's several owes me something. It won't hurt to have

everything ready in case he should resign, and I suppose some of these days he'll take himself at his worrd."

"Mr. MacDermott could do so much—" she said.

"Yes, he knows how the byes on the streets feel, though, belike, he will underrate the deviltry in them; he was the grand bye himself. Well, miss, you watch and see if this will be fixed. Have you said anything to Hugh?"

"Oh no."

"It makes no differ. Sure, he'd like to if you want him to."

She blushed uncomfortably.

"Of course, there's the difficulty that he's pretty young for a judge, but he's done so much for the warrd byes—all the vacation school people will worrk for him. Well, we can just see."

"And now, tell me all you have heard from your agent at Kilmanan," she said, brightly; and Callahan, launched on his favorite subject, kept her till almost dinner-time.

MacDermott did not go home to dinner. He had felt happy enough all day, just loving Moira, but with the late afternoon, as his nerves jangled under the wear of his work, his dream stood threadbare; he wanted a reality. He felt that he could not sit opposite the welcoming faces of Callahan and Mrs. Haraghey, so he dined in a cheap restaurant where he had plenty of careworn faces to look at.

About ten o'clock he slipped into the house where Callahan sat smoking and musing on ways of making him judge of the juvenile court. He was about to pass the office door, but Callahan called him in.

"That's right," said the boss. "Take that chair. You would if you knew who'd been sitting in it this day."

"Well, who?" asked Hugh, wearily.

"What's matter? You look done up. You'd better let Furlong do a little of his own worrk, my lad. It was Miss Carew—no less."

"She—came here?"

"Ay, did she."

He related the object of her visit, noting with satisfaction the slow, deep blush that rose in MacDermott's face.

"You may well grow red. And I'll be glad to see her part owner of Kilmanan when I'm gone."

After a moment Hugh understood. The flush died out and left him pale.

"Don't—no, Uncle John; she doesn't care."

"Well, ain't I able to see through a millstone?" Callahan threw himself back in his chair and added, "I wasn't born yesterday."

A wild, lovely thought came to Hugh—to see her the mistress of Kilmanan, and through him! To see her in her own orchard, with no terrible incubus of a mortgage! To walk side by side with her through their own garden! Never had he wanted her so much. It was not enough just to be of service to her; he wanted his wife.

"Oh, don't, Uncle John," he repeated; "she—doesn't care."

"Aw, shucks! Why would she come here?"

"Out of pity. I know; last night she told me."

Suddenly he felt as he used to when he was a little child and big John Callahan used to comfort him. He threw his arms across the table and put his head on them. There are some kinds of defeat that even one's nearest cannot bear to look on. Callahan averted his eyes; then he reached

over and patted the black hair, his left hand instinctively seeking his bag of raisins.

"Well—well—well!" he said. "I've forgotten how that sorrow is myself. But don't you give up hope, my bye; she'll—"

"No," said Hugh, "there'll be some one fitter than I. We won't talk about it."

After a time he lifted his head and smiled his sweet, twisted smile.

"But it was good of her to want me to have this office, Uncle John; just like her, and I want it. She's right; she's always wise. She knows what I can do. I'll pick up little boys off the streets, as you picked me; and perhaps they'll be set to dreaming dreams—"

"Well, well," Callahan muttered, "it's not the furrst time I've been powerless to step in and help you, Hugh; and 'tis not the furrst time you've fought a thing out alone and conquered."

"Mrs. Flanagan used to call me the great fighter, do you remember, Uncle John?" said Hugh. "Do you remember how she anticipated my actions and whacked me for slapping her boys before I got round to doing it?"

They sat talking late into the night about the old days when Hugh was a boy and Callahan was relearning the ways of boyhood. Hugh got an odd comfort from the reminiscences, and when he went to bed it was with a lighter heart. But long after he had gone Callahan sat alone in his dirty little office sighing and consuming raisins. He was helpless to aid the person he loved most, and he had no dreams to comfort him. But he managed to construct a fabric of hope. He was determined not to give up the idea

of this marriage for Hugh. The boy was too modest. How could any sensible woman fail to see what a grand catch he was entirely—and with Kilmanan thrown in!

He brooded over his plan for several days, and meanwhile he saw certain important people. From that time on articles began to appear in the papers about MacDermott's work among the street boys of the worst ward in the city. His work with classes and clubs and in the vacation schools was retailed.

The shrewd Mayme Broomer dropped in to congratulate Callahan on what he was doing. She sat in the chair which Callahan had dusted for Moira (he didn't dust it for Mayme), and spread her elbows on his table. She always reverted to type when she was with Callahan.

"Say, Uncle John," she said—(he was "Uncle John" to most of the ward)—"you've done some mighty smart work on this thing. I'm proud of you."

"What do you know about it, Mayme?" he asked.

"Guesswork—I wasn't born yesterday; and you forget that I write the most private letters of Daddy Servan."

"Well, I s'pose people have to have private secretaries, however indiscreet."

Mayme poked him cheerfully.

"Aw, g'on; you know right well I never peep. But I guess I can say what I want to you. The real, screaming joke of it is Henry Furlong. He thinks it's his influence is boosting Hugh along."

"Well it has, too."

"I overheard him talking to Miss Carew about it last night. If I were Hugh I wouldn't stand all that patting on the head from Furlong. But Miss Carew took it all in. I

suppose because they knew each other in the old country; she still thinks Furlong's the whole front page."

"Oh, Furlong can say what he's a mind to," said Callahan, easily. "But how's yourself. Got plenty of beaux?"

"All I can handle."

"Ain't attached Furlong yet, I suppose? You'll be going in for reforrm next."

"Not so long as I have the example of you and Daddy Servan," she said. "Oh no; Furlong ain't on my string. Miss Carew has him."

"What say?" cried Callahan.

"I was just saying Furlong and Miss Carew are going to make a match of it. What's it to you?"

"Nothing. I just didn't hear what you said," he replied, clearing his throat. "But go on, and tell me about the beaux."

He sustained his part in the chatter until Mayme was ready to go. But after her departure he sat in brooding silence, and denied himself to callers. He consumed his whole store of raisins, and then he said, aloud:

"Well, I'll see Servan to-morrow."

Servan's offices were just high enough so that Miss Broomer, looking out of her room, could see the top of the telegraph poles on the street below. She chose an attitude of elegant leisure at her work, often pausing for a totally unnecessary rest. At such moments it irked her that the windows were so far from the street that she could not really see anything that was happening; but she made up for this deprivation by staring negligently into the windows of the offices across the way, where sat hard-driven stenographers, stealing—with envy she believed—an occasional

lightning glance at her. But if Servan happened to enter, Mayme was all respect and attention. Servan knew exactly what she was doing, and she knew he knew. They understood each other excellently. He had alluded only once to the source of her secure tenure in his office. That was on the occasion of her first increase of salary.

"Miss Broomer," he had said, "you may count on a regular raise. You're the only person that ever got ahead of me, and I take off my hat to you. Any little thing I can do for you, you may mention to me."

Mayme had replied, simply, "Thank you, sir," and had asked no favors, for which, as she quite understood, she "scored again," as she put it.

Servan's office compelled respect. He believed in putting himself in the hands of people who "knew how," as he said. That was why he had trusted the house to the best architect in America, and why he had given Mrs. Servan unreservedly into the hands of Miss Carew. The long outer office was finished in dark wood and the floor covered with sober rugs. The visitor passed in the wake of an office boy down an aisle between rows of desks and busy clerks to an adjoining room, where Mayme received him, standing on a crimson carpet. Thence, followed by the glances of assistant stenographers, he was led into a small room whence he reached Servan's private office.

The morning after Mayme's call on Callahan, when he entered at an early hour, she took him at once to Servan, who sat, feet on desk, reading a newspaper. When the door had closed on Mayme, Callahan took a seat, put his feet on the radiator, and felt for his bag of raisins.

"Well, John, what d'ye know?" asked Servan, his keen little eyes noting the serious expression of the boss.

"Nawthing; I'm seeking knowledge. I want to know why you think Furlong would do for governor?"

Servan took down his feet.

"You don't mean to say you're willing to risk him?"

"Well, I've been thinking," replied Callahan. "What makes you think he'd turn our way?"

"Well, I'm going on general knowledge of human nature," said Servan. "In the first place, there never was a reformer yet that wasn't an inverted boss. They get obsessed by their ideas; they want things done their little way; it's the only way. They won't take new light. There ain't any new light; they've got it all."

Callahan nodded slowly.

"The day may come," continued Servan, his fat, narrow hands on his knees, "when a reformer 'll have the sense to use—well, your methods—to get good results. In the Scriptures or somewhere it says do a little wrong that a big right may come of it. Well, they haven't learned that yet."

"That's just going on general principles."

"I know. Another thing, though: Furlong is too blamed self-conscious about his honesty. I distrust a man that pats himself on the back because he don't yield to temptation; he ought to take that as a matter of course, just as you and I take practical politics as a matter of course."

Callahan grinned; then he said:

"Well, Tom, that's all right, but it ain't enough."

"Oh, don't think I'm just going on character," returned Servan, "I've got my fine gentleman where circumstances are squeezing him a little. His property is all mortgaged

up to the hilt—you know, he once got hold of some land out Oak Park way. Well, it's depreciated, and he hasn't managed it well. And all those mortgages are just where I can put my hands on them. But you knew all along I must have good reasons for thinking he'd do. What's changed you? Why wouldn't you consider him before?"

Callahan munched reflectively, and looked about him for the waste-basket. Then he said:

"For one thing, I thought he couldn't be moved. Well, Tom, I suppose every man has his rules of honor—practical code, I think they call it. There's some things a felly just can't do, if he's going to call himself a man."

Servan looked at him inquiringly.

"As a matther of fact," said Callahan, "my bye, MacDermott believed in this Furlong—has all along. Now, I've not liked him; if 'twasn't for him Hugh 'd probably be pulling oars with me. Well, I distrusted him, but, you see, I was afraid I only distrusted him because I didn't like him."

Servan nodded.

"*And* I didn't want to spoil the bye's belief in him," continued Callahan, with a kind of blush.

Servan looked out of the window. To the president of the board of the People's Universal Light Company it did not seem strange that Callahan should have wished to shield his boy's ideals. If he had had a boy, he thought—

"I see," said he, "MacDermott ought to be some pumpkins."

Perhaps if the reformers could have witnessed this little scene they would have been struck by the humor of the situation; perhaps not.

"But now," went on Callahan, "things have changed with me."

His big face grew crimson, and he clinched his fist as he thought of how his boy's interests had been divided from his. It had been hard to look on and see him struggle with poverty when just a few of the Callahan thousands would have put him beyond the need of such painful effort, and would have kept his energies fresh and young for the great fights of a man's maturity. It was Furlong he blamed, and it had been galling enough to resist tempting Furlong in the past even for the boy's sake. He had felt for weeks that his boy was closer to him in spirit than he had been since his childhood. But that was not enough. Now his scruples were all gone; he did not believe that Furlong was honest at heart, and this man was not only using his boy's devotion as a tool, but was bidding fair to take from him the woman he loved. Callahan knew the Carew character well enough to feel sure that if he could show Moira that Furlong was a weakling, that would mean a long farewell to his chances.

He struck his clinched fists together and said:

"If we can put Furlong in and get him fixed, I want nawthing better. I'll pull him down, step by step, by God, and have the proofs, too. I tell you, Servan, I want to smash him so flat that not a grease spot will be left of him!"

"I ain't asking your private reasons, John," said Servan. "If you've come round to my way of thinking, that's enough. And one thing more helps us: Furlong is so confoundedly self-righteous that he'll not see how fast he goes downhill. He'll think whatever he wants to do is right because he wants to do it."

"Well, I still think we're taking a risk," said Callahan.

"But I've been watching him since he's been our attorney. I've come in close contact with him, and I've got down to the hard pan underneath his principles."

Callahan looked at him sharply.

"You mean he's looked after some of your—er—doubtful legal interests?"

"Just that. He settled a case for us last week out of court—well, I venture to say he wouldn't have done it a year ago."

"H'm," reflected Callahan.

"I've reason to think," went on Servan, "that the senior member of Furlong & MacDermott has business dealings of which the junior member is ignorant."

"Well, I'm glad you're telling my spotless self that I may count on the purity of my bye," said Callahan. Then he added: "We've got to make Furlong in need of money. If we put Hugh in the juvenile court, there'll be no one but young Ainslee to attend to the law business of the firm; there'll not be much making there. I've a neat plan. Have I ever mentioned young Scanlon to you?"

"Think not."

"Well, he's a bright young Irishman that has the landlord fever bad. You take an Irishman whose people have been evicted, and have died of exposure, and that, and he's as bad as a Nihilist against the upper classes. Well, now, 'tis my intention to let young Scanlon start an Irish paper in the warrd."

"Well?"

"And then," said Callahan, with a comfortable grin,

"he won't see his way to supporting Furlong unless Furlong buys a three-quarter interest in the paper."

"I see," said Servan, appreciatively; "you mean he'll have to come to me to oblige—?"

"Sure. He'll have to account for every cent of the campaign fund. Them reforrmers act as if they disthrusted each other, the way they look afther money matters. The party will support Furlong all right, but naturally the campaign fund 'll be small."

"It looks as if we had him fixed," Servan said.

"Yes, but there's always the chance of something springing a leak. We're going largely on theory, which it ain't my habit to trust. Well, now, Tom, ain't we going to get to work? What have we got to thrade even with the other byes?"

When Mayme returned from her luncheon they were still discussing ways and means, and the waiting-room was full of men who had been in and out all morning hoping to see Servan.

"Well," said Mayme to herself, as Callahan left the office, followed by a score of eyes, "curiosity's a waste of energy, and I'll find it out, anyway, later on."

XVI

CAMPAIGNING

MANY clubs had been organized to further Furlong's candidacy, and young and attractive house-to-house canvassers had been engaged, with plenty of material in their heads about him, before Mrs. Haraghey awoke to the fact that he might be made governor.

"The paper says," she announced to Callahan one evening, when dinner was ready and they were waiting for MacDermott, "that that Furlong's beginning his first week of campaign."

"Sure he is," said Callahan. "Every one's working for him; even that man that's hired at Servan's—that English felly you hate so much—Jenkens. He's colloguing with all the butlers on the block."

"It takes a little Jackeen like Furlong to have to use English serving-men," said Mrs. Haraghey, scornfully. "But I wonder you allow it, Callahan. Haven't you the foresight to see that he'll kill Hugh wid worrkin' for him?"

"Look at all he'll do for Hugh if he do get to be governor," suggested Callahan.

"My grief and my woe, Callahan! don't you think the

man would have given him somethin' ages since if he'd had a hearrt for gratitude? Sure, my nephew that's agent for the stock of the Garden Company of the West says—"

"I'm glad you spoke of him, Mrs. Haraghey," interrupted Callahan. "I want to send him to young Ames. And whatever anny wan says to you, be sure you keep your tongue bechune your teeth."

"Sure, niver a worrud do I tell, not even when Mayme was over saying that Furlong and Miss Carew are the thick wans—not even a question did I ask her—"

"Here's the bye now, come for his bite and to run," said Callahan.

MacDermott entered with a smile that had grown habitually tired. Mayme Broomer was with him, and she filled the house so full of vitality that she lent warmth even to him. For months he had seen very little of Moira. He could not honestly say she avoided him; she always had a smile and a word if there was any opportunity, but she never made an opportunity for him, and Furlong monopolized her, as a matter of course. If MacDermott flagged a little in his hero-worship he had some reason. He worked harder for Furlong even than Furlong worked for himself, and there were precious half hours which Furlong took with Moira while he was doing secretary work for their cause. But his sweet spirit never changed. If his lady cared for these half hours with Furlong, that was enough for him. And because a man must always put his work high, he got some comfort from the fact that whenever Judge Carley spoke of resigning she reminded him that she hoped some time to see him judge of the juvenile court.

In the months long and empty of joy—long like the wan

plain of his old dreams, and as hopeless—Mayme was something of a solace. She was very considerate, very gentle. He knew that Moira had given something of herself to this piece of coarser clay, and so refined it. Most of our big ideals are far from making us look ridiculous, yet here was poor Mayme heroically struggling to learn well-bred intonations, to pronounce "girl" with her lips instead of with her throat—in short, to confine her exuberant personality in the straight and narrow way of convention. And perhaps, indeed, her quest was as little ridiculous as the investigation of the habits of the pygmies of Africa. Mayme still dressed tastefully and quietly; her voice was subdued, her flirtations with the young men in the little hotel were most decorous, and — most striking sign of her progress — the better-bred women of the house counted her in with themselves. Moreover, Hugh divined that Moira no longer merely tolerated Mayme; she liked her.

So MacDermott smiled at Mayme as she sat opposite him at table, Callahan and Mrs. Haraghey pleased with her for cheering him up.

"'Tis you would charrum the burrds off the bushes wid your talk, Mayme," said Mrs. Haraghey, warmly, when dinner was over.

"That she would," said MacDermott, heartily; "and if the world were full of her, then, as Mrs. Haraghey would say, green Ireland would be over all the earth."

Mayme colored with pleasure as she rose to go. She was still making her fight for MacDermott, but she wanted to do it in as lady-like a way as she could. Her efforts were complicated by a sincere and awed affection for Moira.

"I tell you, Hugh," she said, as they walked toward her

hotel, "the best kind of people are the ones that make up their minds that they don't matter themselves, but that every other human being in the world does matter."

It struck him that Mayme had made a good many such discriminating observations.

"I suppose you know it was Miss Carew made me think that," she went on. "I was dreadfully envious of her at first, Hugh. You see, she doesn't have to work to make people like her; in a way, it doesn't seem fair."

"It's just the sort of inequality we see in the world of nature," he replied. "She *is;* she doesn't need to act or show; one simply feels what she is."

"There are other nice girls," Mayme said, "who don't exert themselves to attract people, and don't get liked—"

"She need never speak," MacDermott murmured; "she could just look and smile, and all the world would love her."

It was easier for Mayme to say such things herself than to hear him say them. She looked at the lake with sudden hatred. She believed he always associated it with Moira, and she made up her mind that they should walk there no more. But in a moment Hugh began to talk of herself.

"Look here, Mayme," he said, "it's awfully good of you to take that class of little girls down in the ward. Uncle John says they're devoted to you."

"Oh, I have a way with children," she said, indifferently.

"Maybe we could combine our classes and take them on picnics this summer," he suggested.

She brightened. She had taken the class to please him, and here was her reward.

"That 'd be fine," she said.

They were silent as they walked back to the boarding-

house; she supposed that he was thinking of Moira, and finally her tortured nerves urged her to say:

"Penny for your thoughts."

"Don't you think you are worth any more?" he asked, smiling. "I was thinking of you."

"Well, what?"

"I was thinking how much you've done with your life Mayme. I don't know just how to put it."

"Oh, you needn't be so particular how you put it," she said, with a break in her voice. "I was born in the slums; I never had a chance that I didn't make for myself, and I was trying so hard to be a lady over on the South Side that I made you sick with my pink waists—"

"Oh, come," he protested.

"The amount of it is this, Hugh," she said: "it takes a person a long time before they get to the point where they both want to do the right thing and know how. And I think I'm on the right road to being a lady—"

"Mayme, you've just about arrived," he said, warmly. "I don't know any one else that could have done so well."

And Mayme was happier than she had been for a long time.

"If only I can hold out till Furlong is elected!" she thought. "He would never propose till he was sure of that election!"

She kept a pretty close watch on the candidate. Each week his campaigning tour took him from the hotel on Monday morning, and he did not return till late Saturday night. All through Sunday he nursed his tired throat, transacting his business as far as possible through MacDermott. On Sunday evenings he was surrounded for a time by the peo-

ple of the hotel, whom he amused with stories of the road, recounting how the old countrymen met him, and then stood off a foot or two and discussed him, talking about his clothes and his face. Some thought he was too well dressed, some not sufficiently well dressed; others felt that a dimple was not just the thing for a governor of the State. Later in the evening he slipped over to Servan's house.

Yet Servan was one of the last persons to be enlightened. On one of Furlong's precious Sunday evenings Servan was sitting in the library with his wife. Over a magazine he caught her looking at him repeatedly to see if she might interrupt.

"Well, madam?" he asked, smiling.

He had been accustomed to call her "old madam," but, as he explained, she was blossoming out so exceedingly that he felt constrained to drop the adjective. Moira's ministrations and the sense of her husband's approval had, indeed, done much for the poor lady.

"I'm only thinking, Tom. Whatever will I do when I lose Miss Carew?"

"When you lose her?" he exclaimed. "She ain't given warning, has she?"

"Oh no; but now that he has the nomination—and he's a very attractive man. I suppose almost any woman would want to be the wife of the governor."

Servan grinned broadly.

"Maybe you think the governor 'll be a bigger man than your husband, eh?"

"Oh no, Tom; but bigger than any one else's husband," she said, simply.

Servan roared with laughter and patted his wife's hand.

"Well, Annie," said Servan, "I'm not a vain man, but I want you to know that I have a vest-pocket where I put people like Furlong."

"Yes, Tom."

"But Furlong—and Miss Carew; are you sure?" he asked.

"I used to hope it would be Mr. MacDermott and Miss Carew," she said, sighing. "He's such a nice young man, and he's killing himself working for Furlong when he should be looking after his own chances of getting on. Yes, he's very nice; he always remembers the magazines I like best, and reminds me the day they come. And they were together a lot at first, and I understood that they were quite friendly at the other boarding-house. You can't keep people from talking, you know. Well, Miss Carew she does, but I haven't got that sort of talent. And I simply listen; I don't say anything much."

"All right; all right. They ain't engaged yet—Furlong and Miss Carew?"

"Oh *no;* I don't believe she knows yet how serious his intentions are."

"Well, suppose we try to get her to sign a two years' contract?" he suggested, smiling.

"Oh *no*, Tom. If the marriage would make her happy, I wouldn't let my own loss stand in the way."

"I guess you're about on your own feet now, anyway, little woman," he said.

"Do you think so?" she said, wistfully. "Miss Carew thinks it's wonderful the improvement I've made. But I wish that I could keep her longer, especially now that I don't feel so well. She will make a lovely governor's lady. But

maybe he'll be so busy campaigning it 'll put things off—"

Servan slapped his knee.

"By Jove!" he muttered. "I wonder if Callahan—"

"What—when?" she asked.

"Oh, nothing; just a hard-headed old politician getting soft in the heart business," he said. "Well, you advise Miss Carew against matrimony, madam. Tell her what your own life's been."

"Oh, but Tom, she'd see through that argument," said Mrs. Servan, seriously. "Why, I've told her already how good you've always been to me."

Servan stirred uneasily in his chair.

"Well— Good Lord! you've never been exacting; you've deserved a better husband," he growled, with unusual emotion. Then he turned suddenly cross, and added: "For Heaven's sake, don't twiddle that paper-cutter!"

He went back to his magazine, but he looked over the edge of it now and then at Furlong and Moira, seated so near the library door that he could almost hear their words. Furlong was talking in low tones and with much animation; Moira was listening eagerly.

"They're interested, sure enough," thought Servan, "but it doesn't look like love-making to me yet. Furlong's talking about himself instead of about her."

Just then Dickie Ames was announced. He went into the library to make his greeting to the Servans, and then, dashing across the reception-hall, he seized Furlong's coat-sleeve in the manner of a small boy detaining an unwilling parent.

"Stand and deliver," he said, plaintively. "I never can

get a word alone with you or MacDermott, even when I put on my solemn clothes and go down to the office."

Furlong disengaged himself a little coldly; he always disliked Dickie's lack of dignity.

"Miss Carew, protect me, and say I may talk business here. My lady, do not rise, or you will force me to—"

"What is it, Richard?" asked Furlong, impatiently.

"Well, a duck was talking to me to-day of a great scheme. There's three thousand acres of land in the richest country of the West—the Garden Corner of the West Company it is. He's got some fine big names of people who have stock. Know anything about it?"

"Yes, I got five hundred shares myself to-day."

"Wh—ew!" whistled Dickie.

Furlong did not mention how the stock had come to him. The agent, Mrs. Haraghey's nephew, had given him the prospectuses; he had looked into them and had decided that the enterprise was safe enough, but he had not cared to invest. The man, however, had been persistent, had come again and again, had repeatedly shown him names of investors, Servan's among them, and had finally offered to sell him a hundred shares, and give him four hundred for the use of his name.

"Well," remarked Dickie, "if you've bought it, it must be safe, and won't you exchange some of those bonds which my peculiar papa trusted to you, and get me a few shares?"

"I'll think of it, Richard; naturally, I am more particular about your investments than I am about my own."

"Ha! hear how he loves me, Miss Carew!" cried Dickie, "and yet he puts me off. He hasn't even attended to the

partition of the Ames property, as he said he would, and get me the thousands to lay at your feet."

"Don't be tiresome, Richard," Furlong said. "You know I can't sell your property till I can find a purchaser who will give me what it's worth, unless you want it sacrificed at a public sale."

Dickie's affairs at the moment seemed very petty to Furlong. He had scarcely had half an hour alone with Moira. He had a longing for her sympathy; he had just been leading the talk where he wanted it when this cub had interrupted. It was growing late, and he was tired; for the moment, nothing seemed very much worth while. He said good-night to Moira and to the Servans, and walked away in rather a disgruntled fashion.

"H'm, I've made him hot under the collar!" mused Dickie. "MacDermott never does the grandpapa rôle for me. But Bro. Furlong's all right," he hastened to assure Moira.

He stalked after Furlong with wicked imitation of his dignified air. Moira, left alone, reflected on Furlong's latest words to her.

"I wish I need not campaign this summer; there is at least one friend of whom I do not care to see less."

It was in the fourth week of Furlong's campaign that the young fire-eating Irishman Scanlon came with the proposal that he take a two-third interest in the Irish newspaper just being started. Furlong consulted with his managers and with MacDermott, and they decided that he could not afford to have the organ against him. Just about that time Servan sent for him.

Furlong was not an unfamiliar figure in the solid, handsome offices of Servan, yet he never entered without a little

protest from his conscience. He would rather not have been lawyer to the particular corporation of which Servan was the backbone. Servan received him in a manner that was both friendly and deferential.

"I have a kind of apology to make to you," Servan said, without preface. "I happen to have found out that your property is heavily mortgaged, and that the mortgages were about to be foreclosed. Unfortunately, some of our Republican enemies got wind of the fact. I had to act quickly, so I bought in the mortgages and I am the only holder."

Furlong looked at him attentively.

"It goes without saying that it wouldn't be a good thing for the opposition to be able to make capital of your liabilities. It was in the interest of the party that I bought in the mortgages, and now I want you to take your time about paying me."

"I don't see," said Furlong, stiffly and slowly, "that the opposition could make anything out of the fact that I couldn't pay off my mortgages. I was going to let it go on foreclosure. Every one knows I'm poor."

"Come, come, Furlong," said Servan; "I needn't tell you that the most babe-like transaction can be made black —a man's very virtue seem like a weakness. I want you to win as long as I've backed you. Let's call it an unnecessary scruple; anyway, I've bought the mortgages."

"Of course I thank you," said Furlong, with effort.

"Not at all; and look here, I've heard about that newspaper scheme—thugs; but they've got you, all right. If you need any financial help on that matter, I'll be glad to make you a loan."

Furlong hesitated. As far as he knew, Servan's business

dealings had been legal enough. He had himself, however, as corporation counsel for Servan, carried through transactions the morality of which he doubted; he had heard, too, rumors that Servan had been a power behind the throne in certain corrupt public dealings. But nothing had been proved against him, and, besides, Furlong liked him.

"Look here," said Servan, "I wonder if I can't guess what's in your mind. Now, as far as I know at present, there isn't a thing I want from the legislature. If I do, I'll ask for it, and you can treat it as you would any one else's bill."

"You know I always keep my word," Furlong said, quickly. "I said to the people that they should have honest government, and—and they shall have it. I know you understand that, and—and I'm much obliged for your kindness."

"Well," said Servan, in his friendliest tone, "I'm doing it for you, Furlong, not politics, and that's the truth. When it comes down to it, I don't care a cuss who's governor; I can get what I need in life no matter who's running things."

Furlong held out his hand.

"Well, thanks," he said. "I happen to have some ready money with which I can choke Scanlon. And, indeed, it may be that later on the Irish paper will prove a good investment. But I could have wished to use my money for other purposes at present, and naturally I don't like to be sandbagged into buying that paper."

"Then you won't need a loan?"

"Not now, thank you; I may later on, and then I'll be glad to come to you."

Servan watched Furlong's departure with a smile that was half sardonic and half puzzled.

"You've got more conceit than I had supposed, Henry Furlong," he mused, "and I'd like to know where you got that ready money." He wrinkled his brows in thought. "He has nothing, absolutely, except those shares in the Garden Spot of the West Company, and MacDermott's few hundreds went long ago. I wonder where he raised it?"

XVII

FURLONG'S HOUR

MEANTIME Moira had been passing the months without excitement. She had the ability to put aside reflection at will. She was disturbed about her sister: Ida's son had been born, and within a few weeks her husband had died. Her money matters were in the greatest confusion, and she was quite uncertain about her plans. Mrs. Servan urged Moira to invite her to come for a visit to America. Moira, however, felt that Mrs. Servan was not well enough to entertain visitors, especially since one of them was a baby.

During the last few days of Furlong's campaign Moira began to feel the warmth of the chase. On election day even Jenkens lost something of his habitual calm. Mrs. Servan sat by the telephone all afternoon, hearing results from Mayme, who was happy enough to report rising proofs of victory.

Furlong did not come to the hotel that evening, though all the ladies but Mayme had put on their best clothes in his honor. The next day, too, he was absent, though he had been reached by telephone. That evening he did not come home for dinner, though many of his fellow-boarders

watched for him. Dickie Ames seemed especially disappointed. He had just come back from a visit to his sister in New York, full of interest in his Chicago friends and yearning for attention. He ran in to call on Moira during the evening, and to bewail Furlong's non-appearance.

"The ingratitude of him," he said. "I've learned to play 'See the Conquering Hero Comes' on the mouth-organ, and I was going to serenade him. Also, I've my pockets full of rice."

"Is rice appropriate?" asked Moira.

"Not yet," said Dickie, coolly. "For my part, I hope I'll not have to be throwing it at our dear guv soon. A man must have his own private feelings, and I love to divulge mine publicly."

"What a rattle you are!" she said.

"No one takes me seriously," remarked Dickie, "and yet I shed happiness on all. But, really, Miss Carew, I'm feeling quite in love with the guv myself, just now. He's got the Ames land sold, all right, all right, and, gee! my sister is mad that it didn't bring more. But what can she expect? Land always does run down—the land of defenceless orphans, anyway."

"What are you going to do with your share?" Moira asked.

"Do? I've done. I was going to lay it at your feet, but —before I went to New York I bought those shares of Furlong's Garden Spot of the West, you know. Now, it's me to get some of the money my land brought and start a ranch down there."

"You in business? I can't see you," exclaimed Moira.

"You can't? Well, you will. I can paint there as well

as here, and I'm going to start my ranch, and later on rent it," said Dickie, rather injured.

"Does Mr. Furlong know what you intend?"

"No, I've not confided in him yet, or Hugh, either; but they must have known I'd take a start and get useful some day. Will you come with me and raise chickens, Miss Carew?"

"Not so long as Mrs. Servan wants me."

After Dickie had gone Moira tried to read. The autumn night was as alluring as June; the moon was full, and she watched its white path rippling across the dark water. In the distance a steamboat passed, all jewel lights. A solitary whistle sounded, subdued by the distance.

She walked across the reception-hall and stood looking out of the window at the quiet street. Presently she saw a man's figure hurrying from the corner. Her heart beat faster when she recognized Furlong. He hurried up the steps, and before he could ring she opened the door to him. He came toward her, hands out-stretched.

"I felt that you were here," he said. "I was thinking of you all the way. Perhaps that brought you to the door. Tell me—if you want to make this the happiest day of my life—tell me that you—that—whenever I have thought of the executive mansion—that is our big name for it—I have seen you there to give me my welcome."

Moira was silent, and he went on:

"All I have done, all I hope to do, is for you. With you I can do more—oh, so much more! You must know that I love you!"

Suddenly she thought of MacDermott's tremulous words; phrases he had uttered came back to her. He had asked

nothing for himself; he had been perfect in self-forgetfulness, the very white soul of love. Moira drew in her breath swiftly. Ah, why should she have had to listen? Each one must speak of love in his own way.

Then she knew that she had intended to accept Furlong when he should offer himself.

"Don't you know I love you?" he repeated.

"Yes, I know," she said.

He took her hands and led her to a seat by the window; he lifted the blind and the mellow moonlight poured in.

"Oh, Moira," he said, "say that you love me!"

He looked very tender and eager and distinguished.

"Yes, yes," she murmured.

He held her close.

"Oh, I'll try to make you happy," he said.

She drew away from him.

"It's all very clear now," she said; "I've always wanted to be a man and have a career in politics, and the next best thing was to love a man—like you. It was my grandmother's dream. You see, I was predestined for you."

She was strangely excited. Whatever pleasure she had felt in watching the course of his campaign came back intensified.

"I have always been afraid to have any personal ambition," she said, "but to help you, loving you—that will satisfy me utterly."

"You do love me," he said; then he added, anxiously: "But would you not have loved me without the—the future before us?"

"What you do *is* you," she said, quickly. "I only know that I am content, that my childish dreams of coming to

this land are more than fulfilled. I couldn't do anything alone—"

"How odd to hear you talking to me like this," he said, happily. "It's always been so hard to know your mind."

Again she thought of MacDermott, whose love had made him read her so well; and again she had an uncomfortable wish that his love should not obtrude itself now. She was impatient; she had rarely thought of MacDermott during the last weeks; it was strange that he should be pushing himself into her mind now.

"Oh, we shall do great things," Furlong said. "The Senate next, and then the presidency, and some day, if we are rich enough, an ambassadorship."

"How could we be rich?" she asked.

"Oh, now that I am governor, my good business friends will give me various useful tips," he said, easily.

Moira frowned.

"I hope you don't mean gambling on the Stock Exchange?" she said.

"I didn't mean anything in particular," he replied, smiling. "I want all the money I can make."

"I didn't know you cared about money," she said, slowly.

"Do you mind, dearest?" he asked, surprised. Then he added, reflectively: "I don't think I've thought very much about it till lately."

"The desire of the Americans to get rich is the one thing I have against them," she said; "it's such an insidious evil, too—"

"It's probably crept on me without my knowing," he said. "I want it so that you shall have everything. I want enough to buy Kilmanan from Callahan—or, rather,

from MacDermott, when Callahan is gone. MacDermott would sell to us."

"Somehow I don't know that I should like to take it from him," she said. "He would sell it to please us rather than to please himself."

Furlong felt a twinge of conscience; he had too much the habit of believing that Hugh's great pleasure was to please him.

"I must do something for MacDermott," he said. "I must see that he gets on quickly. But why are we talking so seriously? Are you very sure you love me?"

"Have I not satisfied you?" she asked.

She had yielded to his caresses very slightly, he told her. Moira blushed.

"I know," she whispered; "you must give me time."

"Oh, Moira!" He took her in his arms in a long embrace.

XVIII

HEART-OFFERING

IT was then that MacDermott saw them. The blinds of the library windows were drawn up, and he glanced within as he walked past with Mayme. Like a blow he caught Furlong's happy face and Moira's tender yielding. Mayme instinctively put her hand on his arm.

"Come," she said, as he hesitated, "they might look out."

They hurried up the steps of the hotel, and he fumbled clumsily with her latch-key. He opened the door slowly, and then closed it, standing with his back against it.

"Come here," Mayme said, and he followed her into a reception-room.

"Sit down, dear," she said.

He dropped heavily into an arm-chair, and Mayme sat on the floor at his feet and threw her arms across his knees.

"Well, Mayme," he said, with a twisted smile, "I'm thinking of the day Mrs. Flanagan of the strong arm threw me out, but, barring the bruises, I got up again, sound."

"Hugh, dear," she said, sobbing, "I know you love her, but—but you see she loves him. She doesn't care for any one but him."

He put out a shaking hand and touched her hair. She was big and strong and graceful as she leaned across his knee.

"Most people can't get more than half a loaf out of life, Hugh," she said. "Let me help you—my friendship. We can do a lot for the juvenile court kids when you're judge—that 'll help you, too. And I—and it's the only thing that can make me happy—helping you."

He looked at her blankly.

"Just let me try to help you. Tell me everything. I—I guess I love you as well as you love her," said poor Mayme. "I've never cared for any one else, and I don't care if you do know it. You're too big to despise me—"

"Not half so big as you—you've told me this!" he said. "Oh, Mayme, you must have been hurt many times."

"Better me than you," she said.

He felt an impulse of tenderness toward her. He had always liked Mayme. Perhaps if the lady of his dreams had not come he might have married Mayme and been calmly happy. He almost felt as if he had robbed her.

"Mayme, you're a brave girl to have told me," he said.

She laughed a little drearily.

"Of course I'm thinking of myself when I do it. It was selfish, but, Hugh, what I do want to do most of all is to comfort you."

"Why—Mayme—" he said, after a moment. "I think it is a comfort, but it's a pain, too, to know that you love me. I am selfish enough to be glad I can inspire it."

"But sorry it couldn't come from the right person," she said, without bitterness.

He shivered a little, and she understood.

"I've said all these things to myself so many times—things that ought to hurt, I mean," she said—"that I think I am pretty well calloused. You can talk to me about her, dear, if it will comfort you. You've been brave so long. Just lean on me, and then that will make me stronger."

He looked down into her loving face.

"Upon my word, Mayme," he said, "I wonder if you're not the best woman in the world, after all?"

"Only not the most lovable," she said, steadily.

She took his lifeless hand in her two firm ones and stroked it softly. He remembered their childhood together, and all her loyalties to him; her struggle upward to be "a lady," and her unswerving acceptance of him and Moira as absolute standards. Poor, heroic Mayme!

"I'm always right here, that's all," she said.

She still held his hand between her own. He felt strangely comforted. The pain was still with him, but there was resignation, too.

He rose and lifted her from the floor.

"You shouldn't be sitting at my feet," he said, with a feeble attempt at gayety. Then he suddenly bent and kissed her forehead.

"Good-night, dear Mayme."

XIX

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

THE next morning Furlong went to see Moira. Servan had already gone to his office and Mrs. Servan was not yet awake.

"I did not dream it overnight, did I?" he asked. "It's quite true?"

"Yes, it's quite true," she said.

"Fancy forgetting to ask you the great question of all. When is it to be?"

Moira started. After she had gone up-stairs the night before she had glowingly built her future life—Furlong's and hers and Ida's—but she had not thought of times and seasons.

"Wh—when?" she stammered.

"This month? Next?"

"Oh, not so soon!" she cried, aghast. "You see, for one thing, I cannot leave Mrs. Servan. She's not well—not at all well. Really—some time next year."

"My dear!" he protested; "surely Mrs. Servan—"

"I know," Moira said, hastily, "she doesn't expect anything; she's too good; but—"

"But, dearest, I never dreamed of beginning at Springfield without you," he said.

"I—I—" murmured Moira. "I can't feel ready yet—Henry."

This first use of his Christian name so delighted Furlong that for a few moments he forgot the issue between them. When he came back to it, she said, shyly:

"I suppose a woman in her twenty-sixth year ought to be ready to marry immediately, but—but there seems to be a belated childishness about me. I really don't feel ready."

"Of course I won't urge you," he said, reluctantly.

"I'm a bit distressed about something else," she said. "I had a confused letter from Ida this morning saying that things are intolerable in India, and she's going home with her boy."

"Don't you see?" he said. "You should marry me at once, and then we'd have a place to receive her here."

"I was thinking she might take my work with Mrs. Servan," Moira said.

Furlong shook his head.

"I shrewdly suspect that after her life there in India—and the baby, too—she'll not be able to do the kind of thing you've been doing. Oh, why must the time go so! I'm half an hour late already for an appointment."

"Never mind," she said, smiling. "You'll come tonight?"

"Of course."

Moira went slowly up-stairs to Mrs. Servan. She wanted to speak of her engagement, but some odd shyness kept her silent all day. She waited till the dinner-hour. Servan was late, and Moira said to herself that when he came she would tell the two together.

Servan entered with a folded newspaper which he spread elaborately before Moira.

"I suppose you and the madam have been talking all day of this," he chuckled.

Moira opened the paper, and Mrs. Servan, leaning forward, read with her:

"Governor to Wed an Irishwoman. Miss Carew to Reign in the Executive Mansion. Bride-to-be is Sister of Lady Grey."

Moira dropped the sheet.

"Read on, read on," said Servan; "they tell all about you: how old you are, how much you're worth—"

Mrs. Servan looked at her in a startled way, then her face worked.

"My dear, I thought I should have heard of your engagement before the public," she said, in a hurt voice.

"And so you should—that was what I had, of course, intended," said Moira. "I never dreamed—I don't know how it got out. It happened only last night. I hadn't got used to it myself—I'm so very sorry—"

"So you weren't springing it on us all purposely?" asked Servan.

"I don't see why it need be put in the papers," Moira said, flushing.

She detested publicity. She had always wished to be as inconspicuous as possible. It had not been her lot to escape distinction in Ireland, but the sight of her name in print always made her uncomfortable.

"I saw MacDermott talking to a reporter this noon when I ran into the office," said Servan. "I suppose Furlong put the job of the announcement off on him."

"I am sure Mr. Furlong could have had nothing to do with this," said Moira, impulsively.

"Oh come, Miss Carew," said Servan, jocosely, "the wives of governors in this State always go out dressed for snapshots."

Jenkens entered and told Miss Carew that there were some gentlemen waiting to see her.

"Reporters," said Servan. "You'll have to go out with a lot of pretty things to say about Furlong."

"Will you see those people?" she asked. "I cannot be interviewed, Mr. Servan."

"Oh, you'll get over that," he said.

"Tom, she means it," Mrs. Servan urged.

"Oh, all right; just sit with me while I finish dinner."

Servan answered all the reporters' questions, and added that Miss Carew's widowed sister, Lady Grey, and her baby son were coming soon to visit Mrs. Servan. He congratulated himself on remembering that his wife had told him that morning about Moira's sister. The reporters begged for a photograph of Miss Carew. Servan went back to the dining-room.

"I feel like a royal emissary," he said. "Your majesty had better give these festive young men your picture, for I assure you it will appear to-morrow, anyway."

Moira shook her head.

"But, my dear, Tom knows," said Mrs. Servan.

"Oh, wait till Furlong comes," said Servan, tolerantly.

He went back and told the reporters that Miss Carew regretted that she had had no picture taken in America, but she would remedy the omission as soon as possible; that she was very much delighted with the specimens of the

photographer's art which she had seen in this country, and especially in this city. Pressed for further views on America, he said that he had often heard her speak with interest of the enterprising spirit of the Americans, the general good-humor of the populace, and the bracing climate. Urged on, he said she admired Lake Michigan very much, and hoped that some day the great epic of the West would be written upon that; and that from what she had seen of the eager heart-life of the city, Miss Carew was sure that the drama and poetry of the future would centre here. Then, a little alarmed at his inventive power, he escorted the edified company to the door. As they were departing, Furlong mounted the steps and was recognized and besieged with questions.

"I've told 'em everything!" shouted Servan.

"Then there's nothing to add," laughed Furlong. "Not now, boys; I haven't seen Miss Carew all day."

They smiled knowingly, and he entered the house just as Mrs. Servan and Moira left the dining-room.

Furlong went to her, radiant, apparently not noticing her grave expression. He chatted gayly to her and Mrs. Servan, and smiled tolerantly when Dickie Ames rushed past Jenkens, who was trying to announce him.

"Hurrah!" cried Dickie, shaking Moira's hand. "I'm overcome with joy and grief. Think I could cut you out, Mr. Furlong?"

"I doubt it," said Furlong, happily.

The Servans withdrew, and presently Dickie departed. Then Moira said to Furlong, with a little catch in her voice:

"How—how did it happen?"

"What happen? Oh, the stuff in the paper? I announced it, to be sure. I didn't think about asking you.

But that would have been a mere matter of form, wouldn't it, darling?"

Moira was surprised and rather indignant.

"Of course it would have to be announced, but I hadn't thought it would be so soon. And then those horrid personal details—"

"My dearest," he cried, "it couldn't be kept; it would leak out. You surely don't mind? You see, I gave the thing as a special scoop to this paper because one of the staff had been especially good to me—I was really under unusual obligations."

She colored. How could he make capital of this most intimate part of his life? He divined her thought in part.

"Dear, we belong to the public, you and I."

"But the personal details—"

"It's odd that you and MacDermott should have been so blind about that," he said, puzzled. "MacDermott said you wouldn't like them to be given out. Dearest, I'm sorry; I didn't dream you'd mind. You see, the public is always pleased with a romance like ours. You wouldn't think that it would affect their attitude as much as it does. I tell you, my dear, we're a sentimental people in America."

Moira walked over to the piano and began to play softly.

"Never mind," she said, glancing at him and forcing a smile.

As she bent over the keys she was thinking that MacDermott had read her better than Furlong had. Rapidly she made excuses for Furlong's attitude in the matter; he was right: they were public personages, and the world had a share in their private lives. But Kilmanan had been her own; why need he have given that to the public? And

still he must be right—he must; he knew better than she did what his public expected. In the midst of her excuses a little trembling fear shot over her.

"I don't know this man well," she thought. "I've been following what he has been doing. I told him that what he does is what he is, but am I right?"

Startled, she let her hands fall from the keys and looked at him almost as if he were a stranger.

He smiled at her placidly.

"What is it? Have you forgotten how the tune goes, dear? I'm so happy here—just with you. It seems domestic already. Do you know, I've been thinking—"

"What have you been thinking?"

"Oh, yesterday I was wondering if you are a little cold. As for me, perhaps there is something sober about my devotion. At least, I'm thinking of domesticity already rather than rapture— Oh, we're going to be very happy."

"Yes," she assented.

"We aren't alone here," he said. "Come, get your wraps and let us go for a drive."

Obediently she went up-stairs, wishing she could be alone to think. But she donned her wraps, and when she went down slowly he hurried forward to meet her. They looked very handsome as they walked to the door, which the impassive Jenkens opened for them. And as Moira went out of the door, her hand on her lover's arm, she remembered that the last time she had driven it had been with MacDermott.

XX

FELICITATIONS

THE next morning Moira's mail was very heavy. In the afternoon Jenkens was kept constantly busy opening the door to her callers. Moira, assisted by Mrs. Servan, trembling but glad to practise, received scores of people who had not known yesterday that she had existed. A long list of her titled relatives had appeared in the morning papers, and every one who had ever met one of them, or, it almost seemed, met any one who had met them, called on her. Some of them were very charming people—people of her own sort. She could not help feeling a thrill of pleasure when she heard some voices, saw some faces. It was almost dinner-time before she and Mrs. Servan were alone.

"Dear Mrs. Servan," she said, then, "I am afraid all this has tired you, but you did beautifully."

"That's because nobody really noticed me," said Mrs. Servan, in her high, weak voice; "they just had a word with me when they couldn't all talk to you at once. But I guess I did well because I was thinking of you, dearie," she said, "and wishing you were my child."

Moira kissed her tenderly.

"You've been so good. If they would all like me for myself as you do!"

"Any one would," replied Mrs. Servan.

"I am unreasonable," Moira said, after a pause. "Some of these people are so delightful that I want to know them, but in the ordinary way—and that would have been impossible."

"Oh yes; a bread-winner—a woman bread-winner, I mean—could never know them," Mrs. Servan said.

Moira smiled; the intonations were so like her own.

"Those who really care will give me their friendship afterward," Moira said. "It's just as it is at home, of course."

"I wish, my dear," said Mrs. Servan, "that you could have had your love-story as simply as I had mine. Tom stayed to Sunday supper; I remember it as well! I got it, and we both shook the table-cloth afterward so the chickens could get the crumbs. And then father put them in the hen-house, and he and mother went up-stairs early to give us a chance. We sat listening to the crickets and frogs and not saying much. And—well, I've often wished we lived there yet, and that I didn't have to live in this big new house—"

"Dear Mrs. Servan, you do like it."

"Well, now that I don't feel so strong, it seems to me that I'll never have the courage—"

Moira petted her gently.

Furlong called after dinner.

"So you've been receiving all day?" he said. "Are you tired after seeing all those people? Are we alone?"

"Mrs. Servan is lying down," she said.

After a few minutes he asked to see the cards of those who had called, and she gave him a boxful. She watched him as he turned them over, his expressive face lighting or sobering into indifference.

"By Jove, Moira!" he cried; "here are cards from three of the most exclusive women in Chicago, people that—"

She looked at the cards.

"Yes," she said, "one of them was presented by grandmamma when I was a baby."

Furlong glowed.

"It's hard to know those people," he said. "I've never even been at a reception where they were, and now—"

Moira colored.

"Do you really care so extremely?" she asked, a little coldly. "Does it matter—politically?"

"Of course it does, in a way," he said. "We're a democratic nation, but the stock of a politician or a literary man or a scientist rises if he has the entrance to the very exclusive circles. Of course, I'm supremely interested in the government, but—well, one likes to widen one's bounds of all sorts."

"I have not learned everything about Americans yet," she said, with effort.

He divined that she was disturbed.

"Dearest," he said, "you see you were born to the purple—"

"Aren't you rather exaggerating, Henry?" she said. "If I were in London during the season there are people whose houses would not be open to me—in the beginning, at least. I should have to—climb, as Mr. Servan calls it. It takes money, which I haven't got. I never thought about it be-

fore, but it seems to me that one ought to be passive about that sort of thing. If one is nice one's self, one will always attract nice people."

"My dear," he protested, "we could argue about the thing all night; but hadn't we better confine ourselves to our own case? Do you object to knowing these people?"

"Certainly not."

"Then—then what are we talking about?" he asked, in bewilderment.

"Never mind," she said, "it doesn't matter." She put her hand on his arm, and added: "I suppose it's only that I don't like publicity, Henry."

"I'm sorry, Moira," he said, sincerely; "I always want to do just what you want."

She heard him without the softening glow which she had expected. She felt almost relief when he deplored the necessity of leaving her for a committee meeting.

"All the spoils are not divided," he explained, smiling.

"By-the-way," she said, suddenly, as he rose, his arm about her, "what are you going to give Mr. MacDermott?"

"Hugh? Why, I haven't enough plums to go round as it is, and he worked for love."

"Do you think he has a chance of being made judge of the juvenile court?" she asked.

"Not much, I am afraid, even if Carley does make up his mind to resign. You see, Hugh has been spending all his influence for me. But of course that's in the future. I'll see that he gets on. Of course, he would be of far more use to me if he kept on as he is."

As he kissed her, she was reflecting that it was natural for him to be absorbed just now in himself and in her.

She had scarcely been aware of MacDermott until he told her that he loved her; why, then, should she blame Furlong for taking MacDermott's devotion to him as a matter of course? Moreover, the obligations on MacDermott's side were heavy; Furlong had taken him into his firm, had given him his real start in life.

After Furlong had left her, she slipped into Mrs. Servan's room and found her asleep. She mounted to her own room, but it seemed too little for her restlessness. Then she went down-stairs and into the library. She sat where Furlong had told her he loved her. How devoted he had looked! She felt a thrill of pride as she remembered his radiant face.

A ring sounded at the door, and presently Mayme entered, her color rather brighter than usual.

"I hope I may wish you joy, Miss Carew," she said.

Mayme really did it very gracefully.

"I missed your word of good wishes," Moira said. "Sit down, won't you?"

They sat side by side.

"I didn't suppose you'd notice among so many," said Mayme, gratified. "Aren't you awfully tired?"

"It has been rather fatiguing."

"I'll be glad for your sake when your sister comes," said Mayme. "L—Lady Grey. You see, I've been reading the papers. She'll take some of these people off your hands."

"Mrs. Servan helped me this afternoon," Moira said.

"Our office was full of reporters interviewing Mr. Servan this morning," went on Mayme; "they were after pictures of the new house, with special reference to the suite you are to occupy. It was funny to listen to Mr. Servan."

Mayme stopped rather suddenly, for she heard MacDermott's step in the hall. She rose, saying:

"I just dropped in for a moment."

Then MacDermott entered and held out his hand to Moira.

"I hope you'll be very happy, Miss Carew."

"Thank you," Moira murmured.

"Well, I must go and keep my promise to Mrs. Harker," said Mayme, getting to the door. "She made me promise to bring her the evening paper, Miss Carew. She wants to gloat over the glories of one who was once a guest in her South Side boarding-house. I heard her telling some one that she had always felt a kind of mystery about you, and that Jenkens said he wouldn't have been surprised if you had turned out to be a princess."

Mayme went out bravely. She almost hummed a tune, but it struck her that that would hardly be well-bred. MacDermott followed her with sad eyes.

"There goes a noble woman," he said. "I used to protect her from Skinny, representing the street, and now she—I think I'd have taken to drink if it hadn't been for Mayme Broomer. And that's not a figure of speech, Miss Carew."

He looked at her longingly, and continued:

"I shouldn't say that or anything else to you, but—well, ideals, however noble, are cold and remote. As long as you were only in my dreams—but when you became real, and then belonged to some one else—I'm weaker than I had thought, and good Mayme has let me lean on her. I needed some human comfort."

"I am glad she could help you," she said. "I know how

hard it is after one has lived alone to adjust one's self to—to everything—"

She paused abruptly, but he did not understand the connotation of her words.

Suddenly Moira felt like weeping, she hardly knew why. Life seemed difficult, full of compromises. Was there any one completely happy in the world—except, for the moment, Furlong?

"I want you to know that I'll never love any one but you," he said. "You don't need my love, but I need the comfort of telling it for this last time."

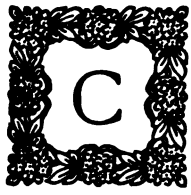
He rose and held out his hand.

"Good-night. I don't think I shall ever talk to you again. Good-bye."

She gave him her hand silently, and watched him as he went slowly out of the door. She wanted to go to bed—to put her fingers in her ears to keep from thinking. She was unhappy; she was conscious of a lack in her life, and of a dread, and she was afraid to analyze either.

XXI

NEWS FOR MOIRA



CALLAHAN did not often go to Servan's office, but a few days after Furlong's election he made his way to the inner room, and was ceremoniously ushered by Mayme into Servan's presence. Servan dismissed the stenographer to whom he was dictating, and offered Callahan his usual greeting:

"Well, John, what do you know?"

"Nawthing. I just dropped in to gossip. How's our fine lad acting up on your street?"

"All right," said Servan. "Of course he patronizes a little; has the 'I'll take it under consideration air' when he talks to the men. I suppose his engagement helps him to feel like a lord."

"A lord, indeed!" snorted Callahan. "A Carew is too good for a Furlong, and always was. If 'twas in the ould counthry, the match could never be made. I know all about them Furlongs—little farmers, that's all they are."

"Come out of the mediæval past, John; it's a fine match for a girl without a cent, for, though he's as poor himself, almost, he'll get on. Mrs. Servan overheard him saying that some day he'd buy back Kilmanan. Evidently from the

way Miss Carew took it, it wasn't the first time he had broached the subject."

Callahan's face flamed, and he brought down his tilted chair with a bang.

"He'll never buy it! I'll fix it in my will so that no Furlong 'll ever get it. So my bould Henry expects to make his pile here, and then go back and live in style lording it over my village that I've improved! I'll push the whole place over into the sea furrst!"

"Well, you've made it plain, John, how you stand," Servan said. "What interests me is that he expects to make his pile. Say, I've found out from Miss Broomer how he's started on that pile."

"He has!" exclaimed Callahan. "Then that explains why he didn't come to you for a loan for campaign expenses."

"In part, it does. He sold out his Garden stock to young Ames. MacDermott advised Ames to buy if Furlong was ready to sell."

Callahan gave a long whistle.

"You know that's rotten?" he asked.

Servan winked.

"My name's not in it. It was, but I withdrew, not finding the investment all I had expected, etc."

Callahan grinned.

"I'll bet you've lined your pockets. But I'm sorry Hugh advised young Ames to buy. I didn't think of that when I turned the agent on the kid."

"MacDermott's blind belief in Furlong is beautiful to see. I suppose Furlong thought it was good enough, or he wouldn't have bought one-fifth of what he got."

"Young Ames knows he's been euchred?"

Servan shook his head.

"Miss Broomer said he was going down there in a day or so to look at his land."

Callahan considered.

"Say," he said, "I want you to tell Furlong that the stock he sold Ames is rotten. Then, two or three days after, I want you to let Miss Carew hear it through Mrs. Servan. I've my strong reasons."

"I guess I can do it all right, John," Servan said, with a quizzical smile. "You're getting quite a mysterious character these days."

Callahan did not heed him.

"But even this money—couldn't be more than five thousand, is it?—even this doesn't account. Where did he get the rest?"

"You can search me."

"Well, I want to know. Are you going to hold off your little gas bill any?"

"Not to any appreciable extent," grinned Servan. "I'm on that man's tracks, Callahan; I'm sure he hasn't a cent, and this engagement of his makes him ours, too. He's got the social bug in his brain, and he'll want money more than ever."

Callahan grunted; then he said:

"Well, we've spared all the time we can on the governor; by your leave, we'll talk of more important things."

After dinner that night, as Servan and his wife were sitting alone, he recollected Callahan's charge.

"By-the-way, madam," he said, "I've a commission for you. I want you to convey to Miss Carew that the land

Dickie Ames got from Furlong isn't worth travelling across the city to look at."

"Oh, Tom!" gasped Mrs. Servan. "But Mr. Furlong didn't know?"

"I don't know; suppose not. He knows now, for I told him when I saw him at lunch."

"But little Mr. Ames is going to-night; he leaves at nine o'clock."

"He does? Then he's gone for the train now. Well, tell her any time."

Mrs. Servan fidgeted, while Servan went back to his paper.

"T-Tom," she said, at length.

"Huh?"

"Tom, listen."

He put down the crackling paper.

"Won't Mr. Furlong have told Dickie there's no use in his going?"

"It's dollars to dimes he won't have told him."

"He's let that poor boy go down there on a wild-goose chase?"

"It looks that way."

Mrs. Servan's face grew pitiful.

"Oh, come, madam," Servan said, "a little travel won't hurt Ames."

"It's not that, Tom; I—I don't believe I—" She paused, overcome.

"You don't believe what?"

"I've never yet crossed you, Tom, but I—I can't tell Miss Carew."

"What!" he shouted.

Weak tears appeared in Mrs. Servan's faded eyes.

"Of course you know better than I do, Tom, and your reasons must be good—"

He was staring at her, open-mouthed.

"But I—I can't."

"Well, in the name of the Lord," he said, sardonically, "will you have the amiability to tell me why you refuse about the first favor I've asked of you in ten years?"

"That makes it all the harder," she said; "for you know I used to like to do things for you, Tom, and I had plenty of chances in the days before we were rich."

"I'm waiting for your reasons," he said, "when you're quite through reminiscing.

Mrs. Servan sighed.

"Don't you see—I can't hurt her—Moira Carew? If she finds out he has done this it will hurt her faith in him."

"Oh, pshaw! it won't," Servan said. "When a woman's in love with a man she thinks all he does is all right."

"I know I always have," said Mrs. Servan, meekly, "but I don't believe every woman is like me."

Servan supposed that Callahan hoped Moira's attitude toward Furlong would be affected by disclosures of this sort; but Callahan could not possibly expect to make enough of them before the wedding. Answering his own thought, Servan said:

"No, she'll believe what he says, and, besides, she'd not have the courage to retreat after all this fuss and publicity. No woman would."

"I shouldn't," said Mrs. Servan; "but she will do whatever she thinks is right."

"Oh, Lord, she's not a baby," said Servan, disgusted;

"nor is she a painted saint. She knows what goes on in the world of business. Why, look how her own people squeeze about sixty per cent. from the peasants: steal the land from them first, and then make them sweat paying for it over and over again through the centuries."

"I haven't discussed the land question with her," said Mrs. Servan, "and, Tom, you may be right about her feelings; but I just *can't* do anything that might shake her faith in him."

As much from any curiosity as from other motive, Servan tried again.

"Well, but, madam, if her faith ought to be shaken, don't you suppose she would want to have it shaken?"

"I—I shouldn't want mine shaken," hesitated Mrs. Servan.

"But you've said you and she are not alike."

"All women are alike when it comes to wanting to believe in the man they love!" burst out Mrs. Servan. "We go through life with our eyes half shut, and we tell ourselves that we don't want to see, and then we say that we don't see—but we do, we do, only we put down the heartache, and we say we are happy and that we have faith, and that it's justified, but all the time we know—"

Servan swore softly, his eyes on the floor.

"You know I'll get the information to her some way if I want to," he said.

Mrs. Servan's flash of animation had died down. She said, patiently:

"You know best, Tom."

Servan kicked away the paper that had fallen at his feet, and growled inarticulately. Then he looked at his wife's

pale face, and let his heart have its way. He put his arms about her, and said:

"I've never honestly loved any one but you, and I love you to-day more than I ever did. If I was free to-day, and you were, too, you're the woman I'd want to marry."

"Oh, Tom," she cried, "Miss Carew isn't as happy as I am!"

He stayed beside her long after her demonstrations were making him uncomfortable. Then he went down-stairs and read his paper in the library.

Presently Mayme Broomer ran in to see Moira. Servan said she was out with Furlong, but would be back soon.

"You'll wait?" he said.

"I don't believe it's worth while; it's only about a book."

"It just occurs to me that I want to see you myself," said Servan, amiably. "Something I want you to do."

"It won't keep till to-morrow?" said Mayme, saucily.

She was a little taller than he as she stood beside him, handsome and strong.

"I want you," said Servan, appreciatively, "to tell Miss Carew that the land Furlong sold to Dickie Ames ain't worth the powder to blow it up. Do it delicately—you know how."

Mayme looked at him keenly.

"Furlong knows it?"

"What's that got to do with it?"

"Now, what in the world can be your motive?" mused Mayme.

"What the deuce has that to do with it? Have I ever asked you to do me a favor out of office hours?"

"No," said Mayme, pleasantly, "nor in; and I think

there is nothing you could ask me but this that I'd refuse."

"For the Lord's sake, what's the matter with the women?" said Servan.

Mayme's eyes twinkled.

"Oh, I see," she said, "you've asked Mrs. Servan, and she has declined. Now, if two sensible women like us refuse to put a cause of discord between two tender lovers, don't you think an unemotional business man like yourself has reason to be careful?"

He was vaguely aware that Mayme's intonations were good, and that her voice was more musical than he had remembered it.

"Well," he said, smiling broadly, "I'm not going to be ugly about this, but—I wonder what in the world can be *your* motive?"

"It's as inscrutable as yours," laughed Mayme.

"Oh, I guess I could figure it out if I sat down to it," rejoined Servan. "But say, Miss Broomer, it has occurred to you, ain't it, that if I want Miss Carew to hear this little bit of news she's going to hear it?"

Mayme sobered.

"Ye-es," she said, reluctantly.

"Of course," he said, with heavy humor, "I may drop dead between now and when I tell her, but that's a pretty long chance for you to take."

Mayme's eyes flashed.

"You're not going to tell her at once, then? Dickie has gone to the train now—oh, well, Mr. Servan, put it that I know you'll get your own way. I simply can't be the instrument to tell Miss Carew anything of the sort."

"Well, all women are sentimental fools," said Servan.

Mayme's laugh was coincident with the turning of Moira's latch-key. She entered, followed by Furlong. She smiled at Mayme, and asked Servan:

"Has Mrs. Servan gone to bed yet? Does she seem very tired?"

"She's not asleep; yes, she's as tired as she usually is nowadays."

Moira unloosened her wrap as she said:

"I must run up to see her for a moment." Then she added to Furlong: "I shall come down again."

Mayme looked at Servan with an amused intelligence; he smiled back at her with perfect good humor, and then he followed Moira up-stairs. When they were out of ear-shot, Mayme turned hurriedly to Furlong, who was plainly waiting for her to take her departure. She was a little undecided; she felt that she owed loyalty to Servan at that moment, no doubt, telling Moira all about the ruin of Dickie Ames' hopes, and yet she was determined that Furlong should have the chance to explain his transaction satisfactorily to Moira.

"Mr. Furlong," she said, "I've no right in the world to interfere in your affairs—"

He looked at her coldly.

"But—Mrs. Servan—we've heard of Dickie Ames' disappointment, and—Mrs. Servan is so disturbed that she will, of course, tell Miss Carew—"

Furlong dropped his eyes.

"It is very good of you to be concerned in the matter, Miss Broomer," he said, in tones of hard displeasure. "Miss Carew is already aware of—of the circumstance."

Mayme colored.

"Oh, that's all right then," she said, and, bowing slightly, turned toward the door. But suddenly a rush of rage overpowered her, and she reverted to type. "You ought to make a good governor," she called over her shoulder, "because you are such a liar!"

Then she went home and wept because she had done something Moira Carew would not have done.

"But it's awfully hard to be ladylike," she thought, "when you lose your temper and just remember you're not strong enough to knock a person down."

Meantime, Moira had come back to Furlong with a grave face. He lost no time in beginning to talk about Dickie Ames. With his first words Moira's face cleared, and she lifted her head eagerly.

"Ah," he said, slowly; "then you know?"

"Mr. Servan happened to say—it."

"Servan!" he exclaimed, and frowned for a moment.

Before he could go on, Moira spoke in a low tone:

"Henry, did you buy those bonds?"

"I bought them," he said.

She looked relieved.

"Mr. Servan was offered some for nothing, and they used his name against his will. He did not have full confidence in these shares."

"I wish he had told me, then," Furlong said; "it was his name as much as any other that made me invest. Did—did he think I'd been given the stock?"

"He did not say that."

"Richard Ames was very anxious to buy, and I was willing to sell," he said, slowly.

"It's not the business matter so much," said Moira, slowly, "but—but you knew it at noon to-day—"

"Servan told you that?"

"He said he supposed you had told me what he had told you at noon to-day about our friend Dickie—or some such words."

"H'm," he said, musingly.

"What I cannot understand," Moira said, "is how you could let Dickie go—"

Furlong hesitated.

"I needed a day or two to turn around, Moira. It won't hurt the boy to investigate himself; perhaps he'll find it better than we think, though if Servan says— I'd not mind if our firm were not the boy's trustees. I should be more careful—would wish to be more careful—of his interests than of my own."

She brightened, and then he said, rapidly:

"Moira, I bought that stock, but not all of it."

"Why did you not tell me so at once, Henry?"

"Because I was thinking what it would be fair to do—and what I could do. I'm hard pushed for money now—"

She waited, questioningly.

"But as soon as I can afford it I'll buy back from Richard the stock given to me, and I'll split the difference on the stock I bought and sold him. Is that fair?"

Moira hesitated.

"I'd rather not have sold it to him at all," Furlong went on, "but he was determined to invest in it, and I thought he had better buy from me than from a stranger."

"It can't be that you distrusted it all along?" she asked.

"Not at all; though one can't be absolutely sure unless

he's on the spot or has some reliable person to investigate. And, indeed, Moira, I was so preoccupied with the campaign that I thought of little but that."

Still she hesitated.

"Dear Moira," he said, annoyed, "what is it? Have I not told you the truth?"

"Ye-es—in the end."

Furlong frowned.

"It's a way of mine, I suppose, to tell the facts gradually as I think my way along. I did tell you the whole truth."

He was reasonable enough, and Moira wanted to be fair.

"I suppose I felt that you might have told me sooner," she said. "And Dickie seems so defenceless—"

"I'd rather not have told you at all," Furlong said, sincerely. "I don't want you to know these tiresome business affairs."

"But I want to—it's part of your work, Henry!" she cried. "Henry," she added, suddenly, "what made you decide to tell me this if you did not want to?"

"I knew you would want to know this, dearest," he said.

The words were out before he realized that they were false. She said nothing for a moment; then she asked:

"Isn't Mr. MacDermott responsible for this, too?"

"They were my own shares, but then he's a trustee of Richard as well as myself. Of course the firm will have to stand the expense!"

"What became of the money?"

"Oh, that? Campaign expenses, alas!"

"Oh," said Moira, slowly, "then Mr. MacDermott is the one who really pays?"

"What do you mean, Moira?" he asked, injured. "Of

course, in time I expect to reimburse MacDermott for every penny he has spent for me. In the end he won't be let in on this affair with Dickie. He wouldn't take pay for his personal services any more than I would take it from him."

Moira put her hand on his arm.

"I don't mean anything, Henry. I'm tired, and all this has disturbed me a trifle—more than a trifle."

"Does that mean that you are satisfied?"

"Yes, dear."

"Then come and love me!"

But she repeated that she was tired, and went up-stairs. Was she satisfied? she asked herself. Surely she should be! And again she had the feeling of lack, and the fear of finding out exactly what was in her heart and brain.

XXII

CHANCE AND MISS BROOMER

DICKIE came home in a seething rage. He had evidently nursed his wrath across half the continent, and it was perhaps fortunate that Mayme was the first person he met as he dismissed his cab and leaped up the steps of the hotel. Mayme happened to be standing by the door as he charged in.

"Good!" she said, seizing him by the shoulder. "I couldn't have hoped for better luck. Come into 'The Park' and commune with me."

"Well, I'm going to see Furlong and MacDermott first," he said.

Mayme bore him in her strong grasp to the seats among the palms.

"Now, be patient, my delectable infant," she advised; "they've only just found out the state of Dickie's little ranch."

"It's an infernal swindle," he fumed.

"Certainly it is, but before you blame them—"

"And MacDermott, too," he stormed; "told me I couldn't do better than buy if Furlong was willing to sell, and took the money out of my confiding little mitt with a gentle smile, and kept it."

"Now, sir," said Mayme, sharply, "you can go too far. Hugh acted in good faith."

"Oh, Lord, Mayme, I want to believe it!" he groaned. "But after being down there, and seeing that swamp and the natives grinning—well, it's hard to believe Furlong and MacDermott could be such suckers."

"They were just like you," Mayme reminded him. "Now, see here, they'll make it up to you."

"Yes they will," he said, sarcastically. "I'm not such a ninny that I don't know that legally they don't have to give me an infinitesimal cent."

"You can trust their honor."

"Honor! Furlong's got it all mortgaged to the dear, plain people," said Dickie, with a feeble grin. "Oh, Mayme, it was sickening to see my hopes go smash. And I'm going to tell Furlong what I think of him, you bet!"

"Well, don't do it when Miss Carew's around," said Mayme; "she's dreadfully cut up."

"Has she talked to you about it?"

"No," replied Mayme, in a reserved tone.

As a matter of fact, she had been unable to find out anything from Moira or the Servans, Furlong's face was inscrutable, and MacDermott had been out of town for a few days.

"Then how do you know?" Dickie asked.

"I know from the way she looks, and—well, I have means, Dickie. She'll see you righted, and if she didn't Hugh would."

"I don't know that I ought to expect too much," said Dickie, with unwonted humility; "and, anyhow, it's taught me one lesson: I'm going to be kind and gentle after this,

and say my prayers at night and give nickels to the poor. You hear me?" he added, cocking his eyes up to the powers that be.

Mayme laughed.

"Confess that you feel better."

"All right; I confess it. I'll not tear Furlong's face off first and make him admit after; I'll reverse the process. Hello, there comes one of the robbers now!"

MacDermott was closing the hall door. He saw Mayme and smiled; then his eyes passed to Dickie, and he hurried forward.

"Dickie, if I'd known, you should never have gone down there!"

At the sight of his weary face Dickie's trust came back in full force.

"I knew all along you never meant to bunco me, Hugh, but I did hate to slip up on that land. It was my little ewe lamb."

"We'll make it up to you—the firm will," MacDermott said. "I can't say when, Dickie, but you may depend on us."

"You look tired to death, Hugh," Mayme said. "I wish Furlong were down at Springfield, and then he couldn't work you to death."

"He could always reach me by telephone," Hugh said; "but I wish he were, myself."

He went off to Dickie's room, his arm about the boy's shoulder, and Mayme stood looking after him, wondering if his remark had a double meaning.

MacDermott dined with Furlong, who, in his haste to join Moira, asked him to drop in and see her for a moment.

"You're quite avoiding Miss Carew," he said. "I'm sure she's noticed it."

MacDermott was hungry for a word from his lady.

"For a few minutes, then," he yielded.

They found her sitting beside Mayme, who was looking over some music. While Furlong was speaking to Mrs. Servan, Moira said to MacDermott:

"You have worked so hard for Mr. Furlong; I hope you are going to rest soon."

"Not for some time to come. There's a good deal of business going on yet, though we have dissolved the firm for the present."

"Won't you tell me about it?" she asked.

Hugh's pulses thrilled at the dear nearness of her.

"I don't think there's much to tell," he said.

"You're looking after your possible chance to be judge of the juvenile court?" she asked, with lowered lids.

"I'm afraid that must be given up, even if Judge Carley should resign," he said.

"I've never thought it quite fair," she said, in a low tone, "that your chances should have been lessened because—because the other member of the firm was trying for a higher office."

"It often happens," he said, trying to speak lightly. "I dare say it has happened to Furlong in the past. Probably I shall hurt some younger friend's political chances that way myself. We just have to play the game as it comes."

His odd, crooked smile moved her with the first thrill of tenderness she had ever had toward him—a warm, motherly feeling. She would have liked to smooth the tired lines out of his face.

"I appreciate so much your devotion to Mr. Furlong," she said, softly.

It was not at all what she had meant to say. She wanted to tell him that she thought his hero-worship, his capacity for devotion, was a beautiful thing, and that she hoped he would never lose it. But she reflected that the words would mean little, whatever they happened to be; the real quality of feeling behind them she could hardly hope to convey.

"That's why I'm working harder for him than I need now," Hugh said, in a low tone.

She had not expected that reply. His need for self-expression did not irritate her; it did not even embarrass her. She thought of Furlong for a fleeting instant, but surely this true lover was guilty of no real disloyalty to him.

"I suppose," she said, hastily, "that you and he are planning all sorts of things."

"I've been working over some old notes this afternoon that he will want to use."

"What are they?" she asked, as Furlong joined them.

"May I tell Miss Carew a state secret—what I was doing this afternoon?" Hugh asked.

"Certainly," said Furlong, carelessly; "what was it? I thought you'd been seeing men all day."

"So I was till four. Then I looked over that data I collected about what the Midland & Southern Railway owes the State. It's more than I thought. You'll make a big impression on the people with that."

Furlong frowned; then he said, quickly:

"I'm afraid I'll have to leave that till the end of my term —or even till the next term, if there is a second. There's so much that's more important."

He looked in an irritated way at Mayme, who had moved to the side of the piano near him. She had heard the last two remarks, and she listened attentively while indifferently turning over sheets of music.

"I should call that pretty important," Hugh said; "it's the biggest gift that can be made the State."

Moira was looking at Furlong questioningly. He raised his eyebrows in the direction of Mayme, and said, lightly:

"Suppose we wait till I really take office?"

Mayme moved away with a page of music in her hand and went straight to the library where Servan sat. She took a chair out of the range of Furlong's vision, and beckoned Servan to her side.

"Look here," she said; "I owe you something."

"Shouldn't wonder."

"Did you know the Midland & Southern Railway was supposed to owe the State a large sum?"

"Think I did hear something of the sort once."

"Well, Hugh MacDermott also discovered the fact. I gather that Furlong intended to show up the road, and now he isn't going to. Ergo?"

He smiled broadly.

"The road must have contributed heavily to his campaign expenses?"

"Come, come, Miss Broomer, you oughtn't to carry your business mind out of office," he said.

"Pshaw!" said Mayme, testily, "you know you are glad to know, and you might give me credit for having evened things up with you. I hated awfully to refuse you on that other matter."

"As often before, Mary Broomer, I take off my hat to you," Servan said; "you're square."

Mayme returned to the music-room. Hugh was still beside Moira, and his face was almost happy. Mayme sighed; she was able to make him look grateful, but never happy.

"I almost feel like throwing the whole thing up," she thought; "only if I did, I don't see that any of us would be better off."

Nothing was said about the marriage. Mayme had supposed it would take place during the Christmas season, that Moira might be with Furlong at his installation. But in November, by zealous questioning of Mrs. Servan, she found out that it was not to be till sometime during the spring.

"Then," Mayme said to herself, "I must separate her and Hugh. There's risk in doing it, but more risk if I don't."

And in her mind, during one of the sleepless vigils that was taking away her bright color, it was decreed that Moira and Mrs. Servan should go to Kilmanan. She began by showing a marked solicitude about Mrs. Servan's health. She spoke of it repeatedly to Servan and to Moira.

"I should think you'd be very anxious," she said to Moira once, when they were sitting in Moira's room.

"I am, extremely."

"I wonder," said Mayme, "if a sea-voyage wouldn't help her? I remember hearing her say once that she took a salt-water trip on the Chesapeake Bay and liked it."

"I wonder," mused Moira.

"Of course some one would have to go with her to take care of her," Mayme went on; "but you could see her as far as New York when you go to meet your sister."

"I hadn't thought of meeting my sister," Moira said, "but I should like to go as far as New York with Mrs. Servan. I'm glad you suggested the idea of the trip."

"I'd like to go across with Mrs. Servan myself," said Mayme, "but I suppose she'd not want any one but you. If you got a good trained nurse—"

"If only I could go with her myself," reflected Moira; "and I've been more than a year away from Kilmanan—"

Mayme's heart bounded; this was better than she had expected. All she said was:

"Is Lady Grey at Kilmanan?"

"Not far from there. I know I could be of great help to her, too, in bringing her here. She dreads the sea, but I am a good sailor."

They talked indifferently of other matters, but Moira, too, was excited. If only she could get away; if she had time to think and see matters in their right proportion! For a moment she forgot Mrs. Servan's needs.

She discussed the matter with Furlong that night. He had never looked more radiant, and he had never been more loving.

"Henry," she said, "would you mind very much if I went to Ireland for two months or six weeks?"

"Mind!" he cried; "why, you couldn't leave me now! In a month I shall have to go to Springfield, and then I can see you only once a week."

"I suppose I could scarcely go for four weeks," she said. She told him of her plans for Mrs. Servan.

"Oh, Moira, really," he said, annoyed, "it's time you left her entirely. She takes so much of your energy that you have hardly any left for me—"

"Have I neglected you, Henry?" she asked, conscience-smitten.

"I've not seen so much of you these last two weeks as I want to," he complained.

Moira hesitated; then she said:

"Henry, I must have more time to get adjusted to you—and to marriage. You see, I have always belonged to myself, and when one is nearly twenty-six there are so many adaptations—"

There was a silence, and then Furlong said, softly:

"You are making me very happy—don't doubt that for a moment; but you are very much colder than I had thought. Perhaps it is just the newness—it must be that—it is! You have never shared yourself with any one."

"Yes, it must be that," she assented.

"Dearest, I want you to be quite free," he said, tenderly; "I don't want my love to be selfish or ungenerous. Though I shall miss you deeply, I won't keep you back if you want to go. I really am happier in depriving myself because it's a test. It shows me that I'd rather have your happiness than my own."

She put her hands in his with an affectionate gesture.

"You see," Furlong went on, "it's so easy to grow selfish. Take Hugh, now; he gives me everything, and I take it, partly because I must; but sometimes it is an effort to remember—to keep him from sacrificing himself utterly."

She looked at him with glowing eyes.

"And so, dear," he finished, "I want you to go, because I love your happiness better than anything in the world."

"Dear Henry, you *are* good," she said.

She was happier than she had been since the first day of

her engagement, surer of her love and of herself. It was not till she had gone to bed that her happiness became clouded.

"I believe," she thought, "that I was comparing his love to Mr. MacDermott's, and rejoicing that it seemed of almost as fine a quality."

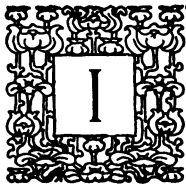
She blushed in the darkness, and then she said:

"No, I don't want anything changed. I want to marry Henry—not too soon, but I can't think of life apart from him. And I must have a home for Ida and the boy, and we'll all be very happy."

But she lay awake a long time trying to think of something else than the form her happiness was to take.

XXIII

THE LADY RETURNS TO HER CASTLE



IT was almost Christmas-time before Moira and Mrs. Servan set out for Ireland. At the last minute Mrs. Haraghey had elected to accompany them. She wanted to see Kilmanan again, now that her pockets were lined with gold, and she said she could wait on Moira and Mrs. Servan as spry and nimble as if she hadn't seen sixty.

Servan went with the party to New York, and on the same train was Dickie Ames, bent on attendance at his sister's wedding.

On the day of sailing, Mrs. Servan clung to her husband. "I feel that I shall never see you again; I'm not long for this world," she said.

"It's just to insure meeting again that you're going," he said, cheerfully.

When she could no longer see his handkerchief waving on the pier, Mrs. Servan took to her bed, and for a time Moira was really alarmed for her. But when they reached Queenstown and went by automobile to Kilmanan Castle, she roused and began to enjoy herself. She insisted on driving slowly through the village, but, indeed, if she had

not the automobile would have been mobbed, so eager were the villagers to see their lady.

"You've come back, miss; it's long sorry we've been to lose you," they said. And, "Ah, but it's good to hear your voice again that would charm the birds off the bushes." And, "Ah, we've supped sorrow with the long spoon of grief since you've been gone."

Mrs. Haraghey, from her seat by the chauffeur, bowed to right and left as Moira did, partly exulting in the fact that Callahan owned the village, partly rejoicing in the Irish welcome Moira was receiving.

Moira dismounted, and grasped their worn hands and looked into their homely faces.

"And have you come to stay, my lady?" they asked. "And is it true that you will be bringing a master home to us?"

Moira smiled, tears in her eyes.

"No, no," she said; "you know I've rented Kilmanan Castle for years, and this village isn't mine any more; it belongs to good Mr. Callahan."

"Ah, no; ah, no; sure who could ever take Kilmanan away from a Carew? And who's Callahan? Come up from the pig-sty entirely!"

"Musha! cock thim up!" muttered Mrs. Haraghey, indignantly; "who but Callahan is keeping a roof over the ungrateful heads of thim!"

She meditated over bitter and condescending speeches she would presently distribute among the villagers when she stepped down to look for old friends among them.

Moira stopped before several huts to speak to octogenarians too old to hobble to meet her, and yet not old enough

to die. Ireland is a country where people live long and often grow hungry.

Mrs. Servan was delighted.

"It's pathetic, but very picturesque," she said. "They love you. I see how it is."

"No, dear, you don't," Moira said, waving her hands to the shy children who trotted along behind the automobile. "They've had the habit for three hundred years. They couldn't help acting this way if I were a shrew. Oh, I didn't know how much I wanted to come home, and I didn't know how much I loved it! And to think it isn't mine!"

The automobile turned into the long park which was still as neglected as it had been in Mr. Carew's day, for Moira's cousin was almost as poor as she was. Something had been done, however, toward patching up the main wing of the castle. The cousin was absent in London, and Ida was there alone to receive them.

She stood in the doorway as they drove up, and Moira thought she had never looked so beautiful, the sunlight shining on her fair hair, and her arms out-stretched to her sister. She was a little paler than she had been two years before, and there was a hard expression about her mouth that it hurt Moira to see. But her eyes were full of love, and her voice broke when she said:

"Oh, Moira, macree, I've missed you!"

Moira clung to her, and then introduced Mrs. Servan. Ida held out a languid hand, and nodded to Mrs. Haraghey, courtesying in the background, forgetful of her republicanism.

"You will want to go to your room at once, Mrs. Ser-

van? Tea will be ready in a few moments in the drawing-room. But where are your things, dear?" she added to Moira. "Surely you brought some luggage?"

"Mrs. Servan's maid is bringing it on the train," Moira said. She took Mrs. Servan and Mrs. Haraghey to their rooms, and then she went back to Ida.

"And where's the boy?" she asked.

"His nurse has him somewhere," Ida said; "she'll bring him before long. And so your Mrs. Servan's husband has millions?"

"About a million pounds," Moira said.

"And that nondescript woman spends them," Ida sighed.

"Ida, dear, she is lovely, lovely, and not a bit spoiled."

Ida raised her brows.

"It is permitted to one to be spoiled if one has a million," she said. "The inexcusable thing is to be spoiled and poor."

"But tell me about little Arthur."

"Oh, he's not a very strong child, and he looks like his father. I've had a tremendous row with Sir Arthur's people; they want to see Artie, but I'm not going to go to England with him. It's too much trouble."

"One can understand their wanting to see him," Moira said.

"They are down on me because I've no money," Ida said, bitterly; "and on the score of the beggarly two hundred pounds Artie and I are allowed, they feel that they own me."

"I'm so sorry," murmured Moira.

"Well, I am going to take a leaf out of your book, Moira —go to America and start afresh."

"I'll be so glad to have you," Moira said, lovingly. "I'll try to make you happy."

"Happy?" remarked Ida. "I don't believe I know what that means. One has to be born with money, Moira, or marry it to be really happy. If you knew what my life in India was! Naturally, I did not love Sir Arthur, and then to find out that he had nothing but debts!" She made a gesture of disgust. "Tell me," she went on: "is Mr. Furlong rich? You've no idea how odd it seems for a Carew to marry a Furlong. But if he's got money, what does it matter?"

"Ida, dear," protested Moira.

"Um! You think I harp too much on money? Well, I have heard of nothing else since I saw you. But you've not answered my question. The aunts and cousins say he's tremendously rich, and that a governor's position is equal to that of the lord-lieutenant of Ireland. Really, Moira, they're doing their best for you." Ida laughed deliciously.

"How good it seems to hear that laugh again!" Moira said.

"Ah, and all I got through it was a baronet aged fifty and addicted to drink. Dear me, have I shocked you? But, Moira, I've bottled up a lot of hateful things, and I must get them said or I'll not be fit for any society—not even American society. It's not very pleasant to come back here to relatives and be pointed at as a failure. Are you going to tell me how much he has? But even if he hasn't much, people get rich in America; and he's very clever, isn't he?"

"He's very clever."

"And not more than sixteen years your senior? That's

better than twenty-six. But I forgot; you love him. Just fancy being able to marry for love! Ah, here's my boy," she added, her tone changing.

The baby was a dark, thin little creature with Ida's blue eyes and her smile. Though barely a year old, he was beginning to talk. He was not shy, and went to Moira readily.

"You hold him as he likes to be held," Ida said. "You may leave Sir Arthur here for a few minutes," she added, to the nurse, "while you tell Mrs. Servan that tea is ready. You see, Moira, as usual, there aren't enough servants."

For a moment Moira was depressed that Ida found so much cause for complaint, but soon the little boy so engaged her attention that she scarcely observed the entrance of Mrs. Servan. The baby liked Mrs. Servan, too.

"There's a beautiful room at the top of the house with four windows which we could make into a nursery," Mrs. Servan said to Moira, as the child cuddled against her.

"Mrs. Servan has asked you to visit her, Ida," Moira said.

"I'd be so glad if you would," invited Mrs. Servan. "My husband and I are lost in that great place, and if you will stay with us till your sister marries—"

"You are very kind," Ida murmured.

"And it will be something to keep the servants busy," said Mrs. Servan. "You don't know what it is, Lady Grey, to have to think up things for servants to do."

Ida smiled her slow, pretty smile.

"I don't think I do," she said.

"The house is too big for me," went on Mrs. Servan. "It's as big as this castle, isn't it, Moira?"

Ida raised her eyebrows at the use of her sister's name. She wondered if all American employers called their employés of whatever sort by their Christian names. But she spoke to Mrs. Servan with more animation than she had yet shown. It pleased her to know that she could be taken care of luxuriously till Moira married.

"I shall like to pay a visit in an American house, Mrs. Servan."

The nurse came back for the baby, and a maid brought tea. Moira looked about her happily. The discontent had faded from Ida's face; Mrs. Servan looked interested, and not once during the day had she lamented the absence of her husband; and she herself was at home. And for the moment, she had no thought of any one in America. The events of the past months were as if they had never been; she felt as if she had awakened from a troubled dream. It was good to be drawn aside into a quiet byway out of the range of all conflict.

For two or three days her peace continued. It was a pleasure beyond words to be back among her villagers, and to walk up and down the crooked, dusty street noting with interest Callahan's improvements, and seeing, too, signs of incompetence that would have enraged him. Given the Irish climate, which makes one feel well and prevents one from doing anything, and long years of hopeless bondage in a land system that gives all to the holder and a bare living to the worker, and it is not to be expected that a peasant can learn at once to make the best of new and advantageous conditions. Moira's quiet, persistent words were of material assistance in enforcing Callahan's plans. It pleased her to think that she could do something for her

people still, and she was glad to help Callahan make the most of his property.

Mrs. Haraghey's attitude was a delight. Sometimes she walked beside Moira as an equal; at other times her manner was like that of an unfranchised Kilmanan peasant. Moira saw that the old woman really enjoyed herself most when she was alone among people who used to be her cronies, boasting about Callahan, and about Hugh MacDermott, to whom Kilmanan would come. Though Moira did not know it, Mrs. Haraghey gave many a black word to Furlong.

Presently letters began to arrive from Furlong, and Moira realized that after all her life was not here, could not be for years, although she still owned her castle—perhaps could never be. She was a part of the seething world over in America, and had been swept for just a little space out of the main current.

She walked in the orchard from which she had first seen MacDermott, and in the rose-garden where she could shut her eyes and still see Furlong's tall, strong figure coming down a path banked with green and crimson. She could recall MacDermott's boyish face gazing wonderingly on her as she stood on the ladder by the garden wall. And now she knew what the intense expression in those Celtic eyes had meant. Strange that for so many years she had not thought of him, and yet now she could see him as plainly as she saw Furlong.

She and Mrs. Servan had intended to return as soon as Ida could go with them. They had expected to remain in Kilmanan only two or three weeks. But first Ida had to make a farewell round of visits and calls on the many rela-

tives; and then little Arthur fell ill, so that it was almost March before they were able to set out. And it was with a sinking heart that Moira made ready to take Mrs. Servan back to her husband, for the change had not helped her. She practically kept to her bed during the last few days of their stay.

"Moira, did you say it was her heart?" Ida asked.

"Yes, but she won't admit it."

"I don't think she's going to get well," Ida said, with conviction.

"Don't say that!" cried Moira. "Of course she cannot undertake the full responsibility of her house, but—"

"She has absolutely no energy," Ida said. "I don't think she will last the year. Moira, do you care so much, really?"

"Of course I care," Moira said, indignantly; "she's been like a mother to me."

Ida sighed.

"I'm a brute," she said, remorsefully; "but those two years in India were enough to harden anybody. Perhaps if she would go to some warm climate—"

"Her best chance is getting back to her husband," Moira said. "I wish I had seen it before. It was a mistake to take her away."

Ida looked up suddenly.

"How much did you say he was worth—Mr. Servan?"

"About a million pounds. Why?"

"I was merely curious," said Ida. "It's more than a Carew ever had, isn't it, or any of our relations?"

"Oh, money is such a little thing, after all," Moira said. "Just to have enough to eat and wear, and a few friends, and a few books; I don't see what more one can want."

"You didn't learn that in America," laughed Ida.

"Ah, yes, I did, though some of them over there love money just as much as we do, and are quite as shabby in their attempts to get it."

"That only shows that people are the same all the world over," yawned Ida. "You may be as vulgar and shoddy as you please till you get your money, and after that the possession of it makes you see how shocking vulgarity and shoddiness are. When you're fighting you can't be a thoroughbred; you haven't time for it, so we might just as well claw our way cheerfully along."

"You know you don't mean that, Ida."

Ida smiled inscrutably.

"My chief concern just now is to see us all safely aboard ship. Moira, dear, you must be married next month. Mrs. Servan is too ill to entertain us."

"I suppose so," Moira said.

"I'll get out grandmother's veil, and we'll take it with us," Ida said, "and some of the old point. Somehow, people always expect Irishwomen to show good lace. You'll have to hurry your trousseau, won't you, Moira?"

"Oh, let us think of the steamer things first," said Moira, blushing.

"Are you awfully in love or just awfully embarrassed?" asked Ida, teasingly.

"Oh, I don't know—it brings it so near."

Suddenly Ida put her arms about her sister.

"Moira, you're ever so much better than I am," she said. "You always deserved so much, and yet you could make your happiness with so little. You would be happy

if you married a sweep, because you would always think of your duty first."

The words gave Moira comfort. She was not any happier than she had been before she had promised to marry Furlong, and she was far more disturbed. She had almost come to disbelieve in herself, but Ida believed in her. Surely her unrest was merely because of the coming change in her life. There were hours when she was happy because she forgot Furlong, minutes when she was happy remembering him, and other minutes when she was frightened at the thought of trusting her life to him or to any one. And she had a haunting, unadmitted fear, because of late her chief satisfaction in the coming marriage seemed to be that she could be useful to Ida and little Arthur.

XXIV

SERVAN'S LURE

EANTIME, Furlong had been installed with the usual ceremonies; a presentable cousin from New Jersey had come to help him do the honors, and he was deep in the business of legislation. MacDermott was staying with him, doing three men's work. MacDermott wanted to think as little of Moira as he could, but when he could work no longer his jaded mind was tortured by visions of her. He saw her walking through the huge drawing-rooms; she stood, a slim, pitying figure, in the doorway as he bent over the library table; a dim sound of music floated from the sitting-room above, which he knew had been fitted up for her. He had gone into it once, and had speculated as to where her piano would stand, where her desk, and where her embroidery basket. And then he had gone away quickly, for he had heard Furlong's footsteps in the dressing-room adjoining.

Every week he went to Chicago to see Callahan and Mayme. Mayme's interest in his political doings was a balm. The representative of the old ward was to her a far more important figure than the governor. She kept

the talk on his work, trying to infuse into him an enthusiasm of which he felt himself incapable.

"Why, Hugh," she assured him, "you're getting to be a bigger man all the time, only you don't know it. I honestly believe you think they're taking notice of you in the House because you're Furlong's friend."

"That's the main reason," he said.

"Stuff!" said Mayme; "take all this parliamentary law they know you know. Didn't you tell me last week that twice you appealed from the decision of the chair and the House sustained you? Is that Furlong's brains?"

"Oh, I'm simply showing certain shrewd varlets that I'm an obnoxious person. If I've gained anything, it's only because the Speaker is unpopular. He so obviously lets himself be run by a clique."

"Well, how about your speeches in the House? Did you know they printed one in the *Herald* last week?"

"I suppose I have the Irish gift of fluency."

He reflected that Moira had never heard him speak in public, and had never asked to; it was Furlong she had cared to hear. When Mayme spoke again, she mentioned Furlong.

"The papers say such everlastingly nice things about him," she grumbled. "Hugh, *I* think he's a bag of wind sustained by your brains."

He laughed at her prejudice.

"And—look here, Hugh; you and I know, and Servan knows, that the Midland & Southern Railway contributed heavily to his expenses."

Hugh compressed his lips.

"Hugh," she asked, "did you know it at the time? I'm

not so good as you, Hugh, but I do love your honesty. I know whatever you do is right. If you knew that—why, somehow it 'll seem right to me."

He was touched and pained.

"No, Mayme, I didn't know," he said; "and I confess I've been disturbed about it, for of course Furlong won't push the case of the State against that road now. He may think that there are more wrongs to be righted than he can handle in one or even two terms, but—I didn't like the compromise. At the same time, Mayme, I've got as much faith in him as you seem to have in me."

He was thinking that Moira could never have loved Furlong if his honor had not been sound.

Mayme sighed; then she began to talk brightly of an escapade of Dickie Ames', in which the dignified Jenkens had been made ridiculous.

When MacDermott returned to Springfield the following Monday night, he was met at the station by Furlong.

"Hello!" he cried; "this is an honor. Anything wrong?"

"Hugh, you're the most self-forgetful beggar I ever knew. Just wait till I am really on my feet, and see if I don't do something for you. Now I came for the walk, and on your business."

"Mine?" asked Hugh, as they turned into the street.

"I got a special delivery letter from the Speaker this morning, tendering his resignation; he's been packed off to a sanatorium. I'm going to hold it off for a day or two. I'm telegraphing right and left, and we'll see if you can't be elected Speaker of the House. Why not? You've been a member seven years."

"Speaker of the House!" cried MacDermott. "Why, Furlong, the speaker is always a hoary-bearded old goat—"

"Not always. Besides, some of the cliques may think you can do less harm there than anywhere else. Some of them have learned to dread you, old man. They'll think you'll have to be watching yourself so hard in the chair that you won't have energy left to watch them."

"I like your imagination," laughed MacDermott; "but of course I want it."

He looked about him at the crisp, cold landscape. They were just walking into the grounds of the executive mansion. The great trees under which she would be walking when the spring came were heavy with frost; the stars were cold and still; the snow crunched under their feet. A little animation stirred Hugh. He remembered that he had told her once that he wanted not to be forgotten by her. Of late he had devoted himself to furthering the plans of the man she loved, forgetting himself entirely for her. But now he thought of himself. She was interested in public life; she cared to watch the shaping of a career; he would force himself in this objective way on her attention. He would make her remember him for what he could do, if he could not be loved for what he was. He was not thirty-three; at his age Furlong had been just entering the House of Representatives. When he was Furlong's age—

As they entered the House, Furlong broke in on Hugh's musings.

"Servan's bill is to be read for the third time to-morrow."

"He certainly began early," responded Hugh.

Servan's bill asked the right to get a franchise consoli-

dating all the gas companies in Cook County into one corporation, with an extension of corporate power so as to cover all forms of municipal lighting.

"I've never felt that the People's Universal Light Company was as bad as most such corporations," said Furlong, slowly. "I hope that's not just because I've been connected with it. I believe Servan's pretty honest for a man so sticky with riches. Of course, there's a good deal to say for his view. This bill may give cheaper gas, but I feel as if, in the end, it would increase the burdens of the common people."

"Then you'll veto it?"

"Yes; of course, there'll be feeling about it. But they can't make it a law over my veto; there aren't enough votes."

Hugh felt for his pipe.

"I've not been following this bill as closely as I ought, perhaps. By-the-way, did you see what the *Herald* said about you this morning?"

"It was a very pretty compliment," Furlong said, glancing toward a bulky letter that lay on his desk.

Hugh winced; he knew that Furlong was sending the editorial to Moira. Why not? And yet—to whose work was due the fact that, as the *Herald* said, Furlong did not seem to have to spend any time "learning the business"; he was already at work accomplishing, had already done more than most governors do in half a term. For a moment Hugh felt a touch of wonder that Furlong could appropriate the credit due to himself, and, in a smaller measure, to a few toiling clerks. What was Furlong, after all, but the top rung of the ladder? He smoked reflectively while Furlong went back to the subject of Servan's bill.

"I know a little what's behind all this. Servan has spent years putting the little gas companies in Cook County in tight places. It's the season of prosperity, and yet there are but three companies in the whole county that he has not got at his mercy."

"He's a great man."

"He's got competent help. Did you know that Callahan is his side-partner?"

"You know I try not to know anything about his affairs."

"Mind you, MacDermott, Callahan's made a lot in legitimate business. He'll leave you a lot of money that's perfectly clean as the world goes."

"I wish you weren't so infernally fond of money," blurted Hugh; "it's growing on you."

Furlong started and drew himself up; then he admitted:

"There's something in what you say. I'll never let it disturb my integrity, I hope, but with my growing responsibilities— When you marry, yourself, Hugh, you'll appreciate how I feel."

"As for Uncle John," said Hugh, hastily, "I don't know what he's going to do with his money—endow a home for boys, I hope. Well, my pipe's out; I'm off to bed."

"Good-night," said Furlong, with his genial smile. "Even if you shouldn't get the chance of being judge of the juvenile court, it will be something to stay with me in this bucolic place as Speaker."

"We mustn't count chickens," said Hugh, "but I don't expect my dreams to be dull to-night."

They were not: he was back in an old country orchard talking with the woman of his dreams. She was very tender to him; she bent over him with a look of love in her

eyes that he knew he could never see there; and it was such a dear, poignant dream that he woke from it suddenly to hear the plaintive cheeping of the snow-birds and to see the faint gray dawn throw a cold light over his picture, "Ecce Ancilla Domini."

When Furlong was making a flying visit to Chicago, some days after he had received Moira's cable saying that she was about to start for America, he met Servan on the street. He tried to go by him with a quick nod. The papers were full of the fact that Servan's bill had been passed by the House and the Senate, and was awaiting the signature of the governor. The bill had barely passed, for there was a good deal of antagonism against it; only months of careful working on the part of Servan and Callahan had made the mere passing possible. Some newspapers assumed that Furlong would undoubtedly veto the bill; others were doubtful, while those opposed to him assumed in a jocular way that he wouldn't forget his old partner, the People's Universal Light Company, which had largely made his rise in the world possible. Furlong liked to be on the safe side, and so he was trying to avoid any appearance of special friendliness with Servan.

"Hold on, Furlong," said Servan, in a tone half perplexed, half amiable, "are you very busy?"

"Tremendously; a dozen men to see yet—"

"Well, I've got to have a talk with you. If you don't turn up to see me before eleven, I'll run in to see you; it's important."

He nodded, and turned away with a chuckle.

"I'll bet I'll not have to go to him," he murmured.

Toward eleven Furlong rang at Servan's door. Jenkens

opened to him impassively, and motioned him into the library. Servan rose from his lounging-chair by the reading-lamp.

"Come in; I'd just as soon have gone to your room, but I didn't know when you'd get back. Want something to drink?"

"You forget; I don't drink."

"Of course; nor smoke. Well, Furlong, you're getting a lot done, and I congratulate you. I'm glad you could make MacDermott Speaker; it 'll do you both good."

Furlong waited; Servan had not sent for him to make pleasant speech.

"Well," said Servan, "I know your time's valuable. Have you vetoed my bill yet?"

"Not yet."

"You see, I assume that you intend to," Servan said. "But you've admitted to me that there may be good in such a company as I want to form."

"Yes, but—"

"Hold on a minute. Furlong, you are an honest man, and you're not a child; at the same time, I know you've got past the point where you'd do a little wrong to do a bigger right. You've learned to do what Callahan lumps under the word 'compromise'—in a small way, of course. What I know I know, though I got it without spying."

Furlong stirred uneasily.

"You're pretty enigmatical," he said.

"Well, I'm going to be plain. I'm going to make you a proposition which I think you'd be a fool to refuse."

Again Furlong waited.

"Old Senator Cartwright—know his age?"

"Seventy-four," said Furlong, promptly, "but a hale old man."

"I see," laughed Servan, "you're following the chances, all right. Well, Furlong, what you don't know is that his wife, from whom he has been separated for ten years, has become reconciled to him. She's my eldest sister."

"Well?" queried Furlong.

Servan put his fat hands on the table and leaned close to Furlong.

"Old Cartwright may have been a cad in his domestic affairs, but he's a hero, too. The man's dying on his feet of an incurable cancer. You'd never know; he'll probably die in the Senate. Life's numbered by weeks."

Furlong drew a long breath.

"I see what you're coming at."

"Of course, you can be a good little boy and appoint the senator yourself; give it to MacDermott. By-the-way, that was a good cartoon last week with him in baby clothes holding the Speaker's gavel like a rattle. Give it to him or some one else; or you can run for it yourself."

"But—" began Furlong.

"My influence," went on Servan, "is bigger than you think. You've made such a clean record that there are plenty would be glad to see you in the Senate, and have the good, easy old lieutenant-governor acting in your stead."

"I'm trying to do my duty," Furlong said.

Servan grinned at the gubernatorial air. Furlong's pose of a great man amused him extremely.

"Of course you would want me to sign your bill," said Furlong, after a pause. "My enemies would say I was still

guarding the interest of the corporation for which I used to be attorney—"

"It can just as well be said that because you've been our attorney you know that this bill is for the best good of the people. You can presume more largely than most people on your reputation for honesty."

"But I've told MacDermott that I was going to veto it—"

"You can change your mind," said Servan, a little contemptuously. "Look here, Furlong, the amount of it is that you can't go on unless you get help from the big business powers. The people that don't know anything are going to pat you on the back for a little while, and the people that do know something are going to smile and slap their pockets. You carry on those ideas you started with to their logical end, and where are you at? You're hurting peoples' business, and your finish comes."

"I'm not ignorant of such arguments," said Furlong, testily.

"Well, Furlong, don't you suppose I started out with ideals, too? Boys from the country always do. I remember sitting out with the madam on her back porch planning our future. I didn't see anything bigger than two thousand a year, but it was to be white money."

He paused for a moment, seeing pictures of the prairie farm on which he had been born sold under a mortgage long before, and later bought back by Servan for his old parents.

"Well," he said, "legal honesty is possible to-day, but not what you'd call moral honesty."

"I firmly believe," said Furlong, "that the desire the whole American public seems to have for reform is vital and far-reaching."

Servan smiled cynically.

"Some big men who are jealous of each other are getting in a little whacking, and some little ones who would like to get rich themselves but can't are congratulating themselves that they are making a clean public sentiment. Public sentiment! Look at the way the public treated Dewey and Kipling. Can you have any respect for a hysterical public of that sort? Each man is too absorbed in his own concerns to help make an honest public."

"Well, I'd hate to have as cynical a view of human nature as that," said Furlong.

"Good Lord, man, can you look inside yourself—see what you're capable of—and then say a thing like that to me? However, I merely want to remind you that if you go on as you've begun you may get your second term, though I doubt it, but after that you're killed dead. If you appoint a man in Cartwright's stead, he'll probably be good for two terms. Senator Martin is good till the crack o' doom. You'll step down and out, and come back here and take up cases against corporations. You'll be a miserable man, for your taste is formed for power, and you won't have as much as a city-hall clerk."

"You're eloquent," said Furlong, nettled.

"I always am when I tell the truth. Now, if you veto my bill, I'll simply put in my own man for governor next time and have the bill signed then. I can wait. Your virtue gains the people nothing, and it ruins you."

"Of course there's a good deal of truth in what you say," remarked Furlong, vaguely.

Servan repressed a smile.

"But, childish as it may seem to you," went on Furlong,

"I do not believe the system is here to stay. The little people who have nothing to lose will bring the reform about."

"What the little people have to lose is a lot to them," said Servan, crisply. He felt that they were talking very childishly about obvious matters. "There's graft everywhere. Why, man, Dickie Ames was telling Miss Broomer of one of his fallen idols, a professor—preacher, too—with whom Ames was taking a course. He sold his students some mimeographed bibliography, charging them ten cents a sheet; said the type-writer asked that. He pulled about thirty dollars out of it. Well, Ames knew the stenographer. The professor paid him about three dollars and a half a week for three-quarters of his time, and he did this work extra on request as a favor. He'd been asked to dinner or something; thought he was getting on, socially, poor duffer. Furlong, people are all on the make."

Furlong rose.

"Let's close this academic discussion," he said, with a strained smile. "I'll think it over, Servan."

"All right."

Servan's tone did not show the triumph he felt. Furlong was as good as committed.

"It's a strange thing," reflected Servan, after Furlong had gone, "that the average mind is affected by any statement, true or false, just so it gets into a man's ears. Humph! when Callahan wants to make a fellow come to time he shows him a lot of concrete one-dollar bills. Same method all the way up the scale."

Furlong, however, had not yet been won. He was at the turning of the ways, and he knew it. He had com-

promised more deeply than any one knew, and he had said that he would compromise no more. He wanted to be honest; he would have liked to carry out in daily living the standards that people like the Carews cherished; he wanted to be a force striving for that kind of sweetness and light. He was uncomfortable under the knowledge that MacDermott was failing a little in his hero-worship; he wanted the respect of people like Moira and MacDermott, though neither of them knew how much a man was simply forced to yield. Moira knew that some compromises must be made, that some gifts go by favor, but beyond necessary expediency she would not go. Many men, he knew, are satisfied with a vicarious morality, achieved through their womenkind, who, sheltered, can afford the luxury of honor, at the same time having a blind faith in the integrity of their husbands, fathers, and brothers. But Moira was of sterner intellectual stuff. There were times when he was tempted to wish that her code were less fine.

And Servan's arguments! He knew how narrow the margin of chance was that Servan was wrong. Well, he might yield, might do what many a man has done—carry out his ambition with the best means at hand, and in after years, when his hold and power were unquestioned, return to society, in some form or other, whatever he had taken.

"Why, that's what Callahan has done!" he cried, aloud, and then he quivered in a kind of shame. He felt that his moral world was sinking under his feet, and he caught at the thought of Moira to sustain himself. He had a vivid image of her turning away from him with averted face. No, whatever happened, he must have her respect.

He slept but little, and dreamed fitful, oppressed dreams. A little after daylight he awoke suddenly to see Servan entering his room, his fat, sandy face looking lined and sleepy.

"Say, Furlong," he said, sitting on the foot of the bed, "I've an inspiration. What cuts pretty deep is that people would *say* you signed that bill because I gave you reason to favor me. Well, you know, if you don't veto it within ten days after passing, it's law anyhow. I've heard you were not above play-acting—church charades, and that?"

He grinned into Furlong's attentive face.

"You've got to go East to-morrow to meet Miss Carew. I'm going myself—not on the same road; don't worry. Now, I'll put you on to a scheme to save your face."

When he had explained, Furlong turned his head away.

"Suppose you let me finish my sleep," he said, unsteadily. "I—I appreciate your coming in before—before any one was up—" He paused as he saw Servan's face telling him that he had made a confession of weakness. "I'll let you know after breakfast," he added.

"All right," yawned Servan.

He went to bed and slept peacefully, for he knew he had carried the day. Before he went to his office Mrs. Harker's hall-boy brought him a sealed note. He opened it with some trepidation. It ran:

"Agreed. I'm not going to get up. Perhaps if an announcement is made to the press of my indisposition I may be less troubled with callers."

Servan roared with laughter. The boy, who was of the type who sympathizes easily with great men, looked at him with disfavor.

"Maybe you don't know the governor is sick," he said.

"No, is that so?" asked Servan, soberly. "Well, you better tell the people in the house not to disturb him."

XXV

THE ILLNESS OF THE GOVERNOR

SERVAN went to New York a day after Furlong's arrival at the home of his New Jersey cousin. When the two met, Furlong had a shamed, harassed expression that excited Servan's pity and amusement both. Furlong growled something about hating the whole business; Servan answered that he had better be too ill to meet Miss Carew at the boat. Then he ordered Furlong off to bed, and held a consultation with Miss Furlong, a tiny, white old lady without any sense of humor, and very much impressed by Furlong's rise in the world. Servan then had several telegrams sent to the Chicago papers, saying that the governor was so seriously ill that the doctor had forbidden him to meet the boat of Miss Carew, since he was not fit for excitement, whereupon New York correspondents were ordered to telegraph back accounts of how Miss Carew and Lady Grey received the news of the illness.

The next day, when Servan went back to New Jersey, Miss Furlong met him at the door of her house.

"Well, how's Furlong?" he asked, cheerfully. "Ready to go with me to the boat, I hope?"

"You need not hope that his excellency can accompany you," said Miss Furlong, in a tone that rather reproved his friendliness. "He is so ill that when I went to his bedside this morning he turned his face feebly to the wall. He could not even speak to one of his own blood."

"That's bad," said Servan; "then upon you rests the painful task of breaking the matter to Miss Carew. I would do it, but as you are about to suggest, it is more fitting for the task to devolve upon one of his own blood."

"You see the matter quite clearly, Mr. Servan," the little lady returned.

She took the air of placing her hand on his arm, and they set out together. They reached the dock just as the steamer was sliding in, and Servan was distinctly surprised to see Callahan's broad, beaming face among the crowd.

"H'lo!" shouted Callahan; "thought I'd come and surprise ould Mrs. Haraghey. I thought she'd be the better of me, travelling back, annyway."

Servan nodded, and all three stood staring at the boat, trying to recognize their friends among the crowds on the decks. Servan failed to distinguish his wife. He craned his fat neck uneasily. When nearly all the first-class passengers were on shore, he started forward, forgetting Miss Furlong; for coming down the gang-plank, fairly carried by her maid and Moira, was his wife. He did not notice Ida behind; he only saw the tired old head moving feebly from side to side, and he buffeted his way forward.

"Why, madam, my dear!" he cried. "Why the devil is she sick?" he added, glaring at the maid.

Mrs. Servan leaned on his shoulder.

"Thank Heaven, I'm with you, Tom! I don't care what happens now."

Meantime, Miss Furlong had followed him. She addressed Ida as the most commanding woman in sight.

"Miss Carew, I presume?"

"I am Lady Grey," said Ida, and turned to little Sir Arthur, weeping in his nurse's arms.

Miss Furlong spoke with a shade of disappointment to Moira.

"Miss Carew?"

"Yes," said Moira; and then added to Servan: "Can't you take her to a cab? We can attend to the luggage ourselves."

"If you are Miss Carew," said Miss Furlong, with some asperity, "I wish to explain his excellency's non-appearance."

Moira started. In the difficulties of getting Mrs. Servan off the boat she had forgotten that Furlong was to meet her.

"Is he not here?" she asked.

"He would be if he could," said Miss Furlong, solemnly; "but I regret to say he is very ill."

Moira drew her breath sharply. Servan, remembering Miss Furlong, looked up from his wife.

"Don't you be worried," he said, gruffly, to Moira; "he'll be well enough to get round the house to-morrow. It's not serious."

He turned back to his wife and lost Miss Furlong's glance. Forever after Servan had a place in Miss Furlong's memory as a most boorish person—one of her cousin's early and undesirable acquaintances, fit only for oblivion. The poor

little lady's reply, however, was lost in the babble and confusion about her. The vast building, the draymen, truck-pushers, customs-officers, reporters, photographers, the little weeping child—all dazed her.

Finally, with Mrs. Haraghey's help, Servan got his wife in a carriage, and then returned to Moira.

"You'll be going with Miss Furlong. I'm going to keep Mrs. Servan in a hotel for a day or two, till she's fit to travel. Lady Grey and the baby 'd better come with us; she'll be more comfortable."

"I am perfectly delighted," said Miss Furlong, bridling, "to extend my hospitality to the sister and nephew of Miss Carew. I will answer that my house will be comfortable."

"It's very good of you, Miss Furlong," said Moira, gently, "but I am afraid that with the servants we should cause you too much trouble."

"Yes," said Ida, "it's very kind, of course, but we must go with Mrs. Servan. I can reach my sister by telephone to find out how Mr. Furlong is."

"And I can hear from you frequently how Mrs. Servan is," Moira said.

"You will wish to go at once, I am sure," Miss Furlong remarked.

As soon as might be the party separated, Miss Furlong leading Moira away with the effect of a funeral procession. Moira forbore to ask questions till they were seated in the cab that was to take them to the ferry. When they reached Miss Furlong's house the little lady tiptoed up to Furlong's room, and then returned with the announcement that he seemed to be asleep. After dinner, as the two lingered over their coffee, they heard slow footsteps on the stairs, and then

Furlong entered the dining-room, pale, haggard, but not so ill as Moira had expected to see him.

She rose and looked at him uncertainly. He came forward with a glad light on his face, and put his arms about her. Miss Furlong set down her coffee-cup and slipped into the reception-room, where she lighted a lamp and then turned it low.

"Moira, beloved, it has seemed so long!" he cried.

"Henry! Ought you to have got up, dear?"

"Come into the other room," he said. He wanted his face in the shadow.

"You are distressed about something," she said.

"Yes, dear; business. But it doesn't matter now; we are together again. That we may be together forever!"

She lowered her eyes.

"When shall it be, Moira?" he asked, tensely. "Have I not been very patient?"

She spoke with effort.

"You have, indeed. It will be as soon as I can arrange for it. Henry, I am very unhappy about Mrs. Servan."

"Is she no better?"

"Far worse; on shipboard she had a dreadful attack of heart failure. I was afraid, almost, that she would not live to get here. Poor Mr. Servan."

"Then—you think—?"

"Oh, I don't want to think," said Moira, tearfully. "I want to save her. She is always better with me. I give her strength."

Furlong looked at her jealously.

"I can't have you spending too much of your energy on her. You belong to me, you know."

"I shall never rob you," Moira said.

Furlong sighed wearily. There was a lack in her home-coming. She was full of solicitude for him, gentle and yielding, but not so loving as he had hoped. In the weeks of absence he had pictured her coming back ardent, if shy, and now she was almost cold. Then he told himself that it was his evil conscience; that he was dissatisfied with his own conduct, and longed for a fuller measure of devotion from her that he might get back faith in himself. But it was not yet too late; if he were to take the train at once he could return just in time to veto the bill.

Meantime, Moira had begun to talk of Ida and little Arthur.

"Ida has been trying to understand American politics on the way over," she said, "out of compliment to you, Henry. It's been very funny; she takes her instruction between headaches. Poor Ida is a bad sailor."

"It's very good of her," he returned, absently.

"But I can't make her see that a senator is more important than a governor," she laughed; "governor seems so much larger a word to her."

"Moira," he asked, "do you very much want me to be a senator?"

"That's the next step," she said.

"One doesn't always have the chance to take it."

"Of course I should like you to be a senator, and some day president," she said, her eyes glowing. "The reform work our president is doing is magnificent."

"It will cost him his second term."

"What of that? To think of having four almost untrammelled years in which to help a whole country! Ah,

that's power! That's what you are doing in a smaller way for the State."

She was ardent now, as she always was when she spoke of his work.

Furlong sighed.

"Oh, Moira, I do seem to need you so much."

His tone aroused all that was protective in her. She moved closer to him.

"Poor Henry; you're quite done up." She smoothed his forehead as if he had been a tired child, but in a very few minutes she sent him up-stairs. Furlong lingered as he was bidding her good-night.

"I suppose you would not be willing for me to go to Chicago to-night on some pressing business?"

"Certainly not; it can wait."

"No, it can't."

"Then it must be neglected," she said, decidedly; "you're not fit to travel."

Furlong went up-stairs slowly.

"So the matter is settled," he mused. "If I do not take the midnight train the bill passes. After all, does it greatly matter how it goes?"

But the next morning he would have given up forever the chance of the senatorship just to have turned back time twenty-four hours. He had sent word to Moira that he felt like sleeping all morning, and she had gone to New York to see Mrs. Servan. About noon he had risen and lunched with Miss Furlong. After he rose from the table he went to the parlor window to see if Moira was coming. The face he saw was Callahan's.

Callahan held him with his eye even when he had as-

cended the short steps and knocked. Miss Furlong went to the door, and Furlong heard Callahan say:

"The governor, if you plaze. I saw him at the window, and I know he's not too sick to receive me. I'm from Chicago, ma'am."

Furlong went into the hall.

"It's all right, Cousin Mary. Come in, Callahan."

Mechanically he held out his hand to Callahan as the two men walked into the parlor. The boss pursed his mouth and put his hands behind him.

"You've talked manny a time in public and private, Henry Furlong, of the dirthy tricks I've done with this hand—this hand that put you on your feet. But, by the God above us, it's not so dirthy that it can stand the touch of your own!"

The blood rushed to Furlong's face.

"What do you want of me?" he asked, hoarsely.

"About ten minutes of satisfaction," said Callahan, keeping his voice down with difficulty. "'Tis an honor like this I've looked forward to ever since I let your name be put up as governor. It was you that blackened my name in the sight of my bye, that took him from me, and you that has squeezed the youth out of him for yourself. My ways 'ain't been yours, but no man can say that I've been a hypocrite. If I lied or stole, I did it in the open, where my enemies, trying the same tricks, could have a fair chance with me—"

Furlong sank on a chair.

"I—I'm a sick man," he gasped. "I have only now got out of bed. My doctor—"

Callahan laughed nastily.

"Don't you think to play the liar and baby with me," he said. "Don't you suppose I've been watching this house ever since I got here—and that was the same day as yourself."

"What do you—what—"

"What do I want? Nothing under the blue skies but to tell you that I hold you in the hollow of my hand. What Servan knows, I know—"

"You can prove nothing—"

"Oh, be the powers! But it's coarse worrk you're thinking of," jeered Callahan. "I'm after no Bijou Theatre doings, my lad. But this I tell you: before a week goes over my head, I'm going to tell that grand gurrl that's promised to you the truth about this sickness, and the kind of man you are. She—"

"She won't believe you!" cried Furlong. "She won't take your word against mine! She knows the kind of man you are—"

He stopped, confused by the irony of his own words.

Callahan laughed.

"She'll listen," he said. "She's no fool; those of her breed never are. She'll be struck by the coincidence of your sickness and the veto. I've a dozen things I can tell her if she wants the proofs piled up. She's too good for you, annyway. Oh, I've got you where I told Servan I'd have you! You'll be as bare of what makes the meaning of life to you as I was when you took away my bye!"

"You can't—I won't—" stammered Furlong.

"Another thing," went on Callahan, "Hugh has the nomination for judge of the juvenile court. I'm watching

to see how you help him there. Oh, I'm after you, Furlong! It's my hour now."

Furlong had covered his face with his hands.

"There's something that evens things up," said Callahan, after a pause. "Whatever I've done, there's never been the day come when I couldn't look anny man in the face. But you've been wan thing at heart, and pretended to be another. Upon my soul, I'm tempted to feel sorry for ye."

He could not have given Furlong a keener thrust. When the sound of his footsteps had died away, the governor was indeed a sick man.

XXVI

THE HOME-COMING

TWO days later Servan and his party set out for Chicago. Furlong, his nerves so upset that he actually expected to see Callahan on the train, engaged a state-room and went to bed. He had not protested when Servan had said that it really did not matter whether they were on the same train or not. Mrs. Servan, too, was put to bed in a state-room, and Servan scarcely left her side except when she sent him away to rest or to smoke. He was in execrable humor, and, having bought some Chicago papers opposed to Furlong, he took pleasure in marking certain editorials and putting them where the governor could see them. They commented on the fact that the governor's illness coincided admirably with the date when his veto-power would expire, and that his recovery was amazingly rapid. The sad fact that he was unable to meet his fiancée at the boat blinded their esteemed contemporaries, who admired the governor, to the fact that the deprivation bid fair to cost a much deeper economic one to the people of Cook County, who would presently be in the clutches of the man to whom Furlong was ex-attorney —the man who, as promoter of the People's Universal Light

Company, managed to avoid competition, and make the people pay whatever he asked for his gas.

"Soaks us both," said Servan, grinning, "only I've never posed as a reformer."

Furlong, crumpling up the papers, made no reply. Later on, Ida, unable to find anything in the magazines that interested her, smoothed out the sheets and read the editorials. She carried them to Servan.

"Hadn't you better destroy these?" she asked. "What nasty things they say about people in this country!"

"That's so," said Servan, taking the papers; "your sister mustn't see them. There are always journals who talk this malicious sort of stuff. Furlong's all right, of course, and—so am I."

"Really," Ida said, "he doesn't look so ill as you do."

"I'm worried about my wife," Servan said, gruffly, and went back to Mrs. Servan.

The next day, when they reached Chicago, and Mrs. Servan was carried off the train, there was enough atmosphere of illness about the party to flavor the accounts of the reporters. But their attention was chiefly attracted by Ida, whose beauty was sufficiently dazzling; and as she happened to be in a good-humor, she let them take pictures of her alone, and with little Arthur in her arms. She had not Moira's objection to publicity, and she was easily amused.

She was very petulant, however, when Moira told her firmly that it would not do to visit Mrs. Servan, and that she must go to the hotel near by. Ida did not see how she and the baby and the nurse could possibly disturb Mrs. Servan, no matter how ill she was. Moira promised to dine

with her that evening, and introduce her to some people who might interest her.

"Of course, Henry will be there," said Ida, with a little brightening, "and I suppose there must be some other tolerable men."

When Mrs. Harker had shown the only vacant rooms she had, Ida's disfavor returned.

"Mayn't I have a sitting-room?" she asked.

"Ida, dear, we can't afford it," said Moira, distressed. "It won't be for long."

"Of course not. I suppose Mrs. Servan really will get better?"

"Oh yes, yes, yes!" said Moira. "There is to be a consultation of doctors this evening. Mr. Servan won't let me stay with her now. I'm not to come back to the house till the doctors have gone."

"Are you thinking of not getting married till she's better?" asked Ida.

"Oh, I must stay with her till—"

"And I'm to stop here till you're married? Humph!"

Then she kissed her sister penitently.

At the dinner-table Moira and Ida were joined by Mayme, who greeted Moira with more effusiveness than she meant to, though not more than she felt. Ida and she were introduced, and Mayme held out her hand. Ida looked at it with a faint surprise, and then barely touched it. Moira blushed, and for her sake Mayme gave Lady Grey what she called "one more chance."

"Are you tired from your journey, Lady Grey?"

"Really, it's very good of you to ask, Miss—er—"

"Broomer," returned Mayme, briefly. "And you'll hear

from me again, ma'am," she said, mentally. Then she thought, "I can't be a real lady yet, or she'd not have squelched me this way." But her conclusion was, "Huh, the trouble of it is she's not a lady if she *has* got a title!"

Meantime, Moira tried to atone for her sister's rudeness to Mayme.

"I have missed you, Miss Broomer," she said. "I shall never forget how good you were to me when I first went to Mrs. Harker's."

"Is it Miss—er—Broomer's mission to be a good Samaritan to new-comers?" asked Ida, with her slow, sweet drawl.

"Not persistently," said Mayme, coolly. "I always try to be polite to them, but I drop them if their manners are below decent standard."

"Very interesting," murmured Ida.

Moira's eyes were downcast, and Mayme began to talk briskly to her. She told her all about Dickie Ames.

"He passed you on a train to New York," she chattered. "His sister was lately married, and though Dickie was at the wedding, it seems that she and her husband wanted him back again on a matter of important business. Fancy Dickie connected with any important business!"

Mayme's steady stream of talk faltered only when the conviction came to her that a thorough lady would have spared a retort to Lady Grey in order to save her sister's feelings. Mayme might have reflected that it spoke well for her mental energy that she was able to deal at all with Lady Grey, for Moira's return had put her in a state of unhappy suspense. During Hugh's separation from Moira she thought that he had been more at peace than for months before. Mayme supposed that it was because there was

nothing concrete to remind him of her; that renunciation was becoming a habit in her absence. He had been full of zest for his work since his election to the Speakership; his sense of humor, usually curiously latent when Moira was by, had come back; he had made one or two brief, witty speeches which had convulsed the House, reinforcing the esteem in which he was already held. Mayme had been hopeful that her own hold on Hugh's heart was growing stronger. His talk was natural enough, his attentions less plainly a matter of duty.

And now Mayme was wondering, feverishly, how Moira's return would affect him. He had come to Chicago to meet Furlong, but had not gone to the train. Mayme knew, however, that he was closeted with Furlong up-stairs. Soon they would come into the dining-room, and then—

When Hugh entered he did not turn toward the table at which Moira sat. Mayme's eyes, following him, did not note Moira's glance. Hugh pulled out his chair and sat down, listening to Furlong. Then he took up the menu and seemed to be examining it. But all the time he was feeling Moira's presence and wondering how soon he dared look. At last he lifted his eyes and threw her a rapid glance; then his heart leaped, for, quick as the look had been, Moira had caught it and had given him a bright smile. His hungry but diffident heart could not have been mistaken; it was a warm, welcoming smile. He bowed and turned away again, and poor Mayme, whose intuition told her what her eyes did not, sighed deeply. It was all to do over again, all to do over. At that moment she would have received helplessly the most obvious stab of which Lady Grey was capable.

"It doesn't seem as if I could ever win out," she thought, desolately. "And yet how in the world am I to give up?"

After dinner the members of the household showed themselves anxious to welcome Moira and to meet Lady Grey. Mayme cynically observed that Lady Grey plainly showed herself more interested in the men than in the women.

"Making eyes like any shop-girl," thought Mayme, with the superiority of one who had not ogled for over a year.

Lady Grey was pleasant enough to the women, however. She did not intend to make any discriminations until she found out exactly what each woman stood for, and, as she had already discovered, one could not always tell by bearing or dress what social position any given woman might hold. If she had not heard Mrs. Servan talk about Miss Broomer, she would never have guessed that she was merely a person engaged in an office.

It was some time before MacDermott approached Moira, and when he did it was half with the feeling that he had imagined that friendly smile. But she held out her hand warmly.

"I am so glad you are back," he said.

"And I," she returned; "though when I was in Kilmanan I thought I never wanted to leave it. I hear you have won honors during my absence?"

"Oh, the Speakership!" He spoke as if it were a trifle, but he waited intensely for her reply.

"It's splendid that you are getting what you deserve," she said; "but I did not mean that only. Mr. Furlong tells me that Judge Carley has resigned, and that you are nominated for his position as judge of the juvenile court. I always wanted you to have that."

"But—I'm afraid I'm not going to get it," he said.

Her face fell a little.

"I know. Mr. Servan says that you strained your credit for Mr. Furlong—"

"Oh, it's not that," he said, hastily. "I think they want an older man. I hesitated to run, especially since I have the Speakership, but I remembered that you wanted me to—"

She dropped her eyes; then she said:

"I shall have two interesting careers now to follow."

Some one interrupted them, and he went away with a singing heart. She had never before been so friendly. And now— But of course her manner was due only to the excess of her joy in having come back to Furlong.

Anxious about Mrs. Servan, Moira went home as soon after dinner as she could, Furlong with her. The two sat silent in the library, for the doctors were still in the house. They could hear up-stairs the murmur of their voices—and Servan's, pitched a little high. A certain heaviness lay on the spirit of both, and Furlong began to speak hopeful words which Moira tried to believe.

Presently Servan came down and told them, somehow, that his wife's life was a matter of days. Then he went to her bedside. Furlong said some words of comfort to Moira, and then he broke out, impatiently:

"You must get away from this house. It will only remind you of her. Moira, come to me at once!"

She felt a gush of impatient anger at him. Why should he press the matter now? Was this the time to be thinking of himself? Then she was penitent; he was thinking of her, too.

"Don't you love me enough to come even to-morrow if nothing were in the way?" he asked.

She drew in her breath suddenly, for his question brought with it a rush of resistance. No, no, she must have more time. She shut her eyes and clinched her fist. Of course, of course, she loved him, and it was shameful to put him off any longer; and Ida was waiting, too. She opened her eyes and said, in a strained voice:

"I will marry you the first of next month, but please do not permit it to be announced."

XXVII

DICKIE HURLS A BOMB

THE next evening at about half-past nine Moira left Mrs. Servan and went downstairs to Furlong, waiting for her in the library. They had scarcely greeted each other when Dickie Ames hurtled into the house, his suit-case in his hand, his hat awry. When he saw Furlong he dropped his luggage and hurried toward him. Moira had been hidden from view, and Dickie paused for a moment when he came upon her. Then he laughed bitterly.

"It's just as well you're here. If Furlong can't explain things you had better see the kind of man you are going to marry."

Furlong rose.

"Leave the room, Richard; you've been drinking."

Dickie dodged his arm.

"Not much! My brother-in-law and I have been investigating your tricks about the partition of my property. You've robbed us, that's what you've done!"

Furlong seized him.

"Wait a moment," Moira said; "since Mr. Ames has chosen to insult you here, let him explain himself fully,

and then you will tell him what will make him apologize."

"He'd better go," said Furlong, dragging the boy to the door.

"You're afraid," sneered Dickie. "You're afraid to let her hear it, for she's a thoroughbred and you're a thief!"

Furlong released him abruptly.

"Now, speak," he said, his face pale, his nostrils dilating.

Breathlessly, Dickie addressed himself to Moira.

"He *is* a thief. He didn't take pains to advertise our property well, and he had a man buy it in for a song, and he sold it again to a New York man and cleared up twenty thousand dollars."

"Of course there's a mistake," Moira said to Furlong.

"Certainly. The firm arranged for the public sale of the land—"

"Yes, MacDermott's in it, too," said Dickie, half-sobbing. "I'd always thought he was straight, but you've both done me—first on that Garden Spot of the West stock, that you've never settled with me for, and now on this land—"

"Richard, pull yourself together," said Furlong, coldly. "You say I, or we, had a man buy in your property—"

"You can't deny it. It was a man who hadn't a dollar of his own—"

"You are very sure of your assertion," said Furlong, sharply.

Dickie cackled and pointed into the hall. Jenkens was passing with a pitcher of ice-water.

"Say, Jenkens, come here," shouted Dickie, "the governor wants you!"

Jenkens hesitated and then approached.

"Here's the man that bought in the property," Dickie said—"the man you got a job for with Mrs. Harker."

Furlong's face was white.

"Well, why don't you explain?" said Dickie.

"An explanation is simple enough," said Furlong, with effort, "but I insist that this is not the place. Why, you'll have the whole house in here next!"

"Henry, matters have gone so far," Moira said, painfully, "I think you owe it to Mr. Ames not to keep him waiting, and he will wish to set himself right with you."

Furlong caught his breath.

"Richard," he said, unsteadily, "if you have lost anything by the firm it shall be repaid."

"That don't go," Dickie said. "I've heard it before."

Moira's face was very tense. Jenkens looked at her a moment; then he said, in his irreproachable tone:

"If the governor will pardon me for interfering, I wish to say that it is better not to keep Miss Carew waiting—or Mr. Ames. It was Mr. MacDermott who instructed me to buy in the property if it were going at too low a price. The governor, you will recall, Mr. Ames, was too busy at that time to attend to the business of the firm. No doubt Mr. MacDermott has not yet found time to make his report to the governor—"

"Furlong knew, all right," said Dickie; "he's the senior partner."

"Silence, Richard; I shall see you righted."

"Aw, you're sparring for time," said Dickie, contemptuously.

"MacDermott managed the affairs of the firm just be-

fore we disbanded," said Furlong to Moira, in a kind of frenzy; "but whatever mistakes there may have been, I want to bear the brunt of them. If there has been a blunder, Richard; I say *if*, mind—"

Dickie's excitement, and the drink he had been taking, affected him to tears.

"I'd liked MacDermott better than any one in the world," he said, chokingly, "and when I see him—"

He stumbled out into the hall, and, mechanically grasping his suit-case, dashed into the street. Moira glanced at the respectfully waiting Jenkens.

"You may go, Jenkens," she said.

Furlong passed his handkerchief over his brow.

"I'm sorry, dearest," he said, "that you should have been dragged into this scene. It is disgraceful for Ames to come here drunk—the little firebrand."

"I wish you would explain to me more fully than you did to him," Moira said. "Is this scheme of which he has—has accused the firm—legitimate business?"

"Not when we are the boy's trustees. The same thing could be done in a business way, but professionally it would be wrong—"

"Wrong!" she interrupted. "Do you mean that a lawyer who did a thing like that could be disbarred?"

He started.

"I—yes; but it can be explained. I shouldn't have let Richard go out of the house. I must speak to MacDermott."

"Do you mean," said Moira, in a low voice, "that Mr. MacDermott is responsible for cheating this boy?"

"Cheating! Such a word!"

"We need not mince words, Henry," she said, sternly.

"Moira, dear, can you use that tone to a man you are going to marry next month—a man you are going to accept, be his faults and virtues what they may?"

His voice was thrilling; he had summoned all the force of his love; he was trying to compel her mood to his. For a moment Moira felt all the old charm that had won her when he had come to her full of a sense of power through his political victory. She almost leaned toward him; then she put up her hand.

"No, Henry, do not attempt to sway me. I am full of fear. Tell me!"

His head was perfectly clear.

"Moira," he said, slowly, "a good deal has not been explained between MacDermott and me. It is quite possible that in the hurry of our business at the end, and when so much campaign money was passing back and forth—"

"Wait, wait," said Moira; "the firm has done a dishonorable thing; one of you two men is responsible—"

The ground was slipping from beneath Furlong's feet; he made a last effort to save himself.

"Then—Moira—I've not wanted to— Yes, MacDermott is responsible, but it can be explained—and you'll remember how zealous he has been in my service—"

She looked at him keenly.

"How can it be explained, Henry? Are you trying to shield him?"

"Moira," he said, in an agony, "he would do anything for me. I—I can't— You will admit that you don't know much about legal matters, and can you not believe me when I tell you on my word of honor, my word of honor,

that there are circumstances you don't know and—and which I can find out from Hugh, which will excuse him, if not justify—"

He was earnest, flushed. Moira was bewildered; she could not understand the wild excitement that assailed him.

"I believe you," she said, after a long pause; "but I want him to come and tell me the truth himself."

He stared at her blankly.

"In Heaven's name, why?"

"Let me think!" cried Moira. She put her hands over her eyes, and then, in a flash she knew.

"This man loves me," she said, slowly, "and I have come to find out, very lately, that I trust and reverence that love. I have believed that his love for me has lifted him. I—I want to hear from his own lips that—that—"

There was a long pause.

"Do you mean," said Furlong, in a low tone, "that you will not believe me *unless* I bring him?"

She gasped.

"Henry, how can I say that? My mind tells me that you couldn't deceive me, but—but I sha'n't *feel* satisfied until he tells me—"

Furlong rose, and what Servan called his play-actor instinct came to his assistance.

"I'm very tired," he said. "You know I've been ill recently, and I can't seem to think—I'll tell him what you say."

He looked ghastly and pained, and Moira felt very sorry.

"Don't be unhappy, Henry," she said. "I am bewildered myself. I'll go up-stairs."

"Good-night," he said; "I must send a message to Servan."

He watched her wearily as she went up-stairs. Then he scribbled a note to Servan, and called Jenkens.

"Take that to Mr. Servan," he said, with downcast eyes. "If he says he can't see me, add that the business concerns Miss Carew."

Jenkens went away, and presently he returned to say that Servan would come down-stairs.

Servan's bulk seemed to loom large as he creaked heavily toward Furlong, his moody eyes staring at nothing.

"Well," he croaked, "what you want?"

"It's Miss Carew's business—in a way, but—I'll talk quickly. You know how pinched for money I was in the campaign? I—I—"

"Cut along," said Servan.

Stumblingly, Furlong told his story.

"I see," said Servan; "you did the kid out of twenty thousand."

"I—I meant—"

"Oh, drop it!" growled Servan. "What the devil do I care about your moral psychology?"

"I didn't want to come to you till I had to," said Furlong, goaded. "The fact is that Miss Carew has almost found out, and I want you to let me have your check for twenty-five thousand. I'll pay you back some day—"

"I've a good mind to let you go to the devil," said Servan, drearily. "What do you suppose I care, now that this gives me a hold over you that 'll be worth a hundred times as much to me when you're a senator? But I know well enough I'll care in a month. Nothing can cure me of money-

making. Besides, Miss Carew has been good to my madam. If it takes twenty-five thousand to square you with her, and she wants you squared, you can have it."

"Make out the check to Richard Ames," said Furlong, hoarsely.

Servan wrote the check, handed it to Furlong, and shuffled off without a word.

Furlong let himself out, and walked slowly up the steps of the hotel. The hard part of his task was to come. He had asked MacDermott to drop into his rooms at ten o'clock. He ascended to the second floor, and walked up and down the hall, trying to summon enough courage to meet his friend. He thought painfully of MacDermott's long years of devotion. He could see him, a big-eyed child, gazing up worshipfully at the tall youth who brought him fairy books; he could see him during those last years at law school, with "Furlong, my mentor," written large upon him. Furlong winced. MacDermott's idealism, his faith, had made him a better man; now all that trust was to be shattered. As he paused outside the door he had a vision of Dickie weeping at his loss of faith in MacDermott. MacDermott would feel just as badly—

Then, goaded by his dangers, by Callahan's threats, by young Ames' knowledge, he knocked and entered.

XXVIII

MACDERMOTT SEES THE FEET OF CLAY

S Furlong entered, Hugh looked up from the papers over which he was working and pointed to a comfortable chair.

"You see, I've been making myself at home," he said. "Has anything gone wrong?" he added, with apprehension, as he saw Furlong's expression.

"Everything. You'll have to forgive me, Hugh. I've been so tempted—and I wanted to give her everything—"

Standing, he told Hugh what had taken place downstairs, omitting only Moira's demand.

"I have no doubt," he added, "that it was my past favors to Jenkens which made him say it was you who told him to buy in the property. He saw I was in a tight place, and he admires Miss Carew."

"Beautiful loyalty," said MacDermott, with a hard laugh. "And vou let him accuse me, Furlong—you let him!"

He rose and stood facing Furlong across the table.

Furlong poured out a torrent of self-abuse mingled with excuses, and then he added:

"She's promised to marry me in two or three weeks. It's

too late now— And she loves me; she won't give me up. But, don't you see, if she hasn't full faith in me, she won't be happy? She's the soul of honor—"

"I know what she is," said Hugh. "It was because she loved you that I got back my old faith in you that I was beginning to lose. Furlong, you're not fit to marry her."

"Look here," said Furlong, desperately, "you know her pretty well. On your honor, now—with her promise given to me, with the date of the marriage set, with Lady Grey and that child half dependent on her, and with her love for me —do you think she'd withdraw?"

Hugh hesitated.

"I don't know; I don't know."

"Almost her last words were that she believed me. Can't you see that she wants to believe me?"

"But could she think I would do it," muttered MacDermott, "after—after—"

"Hugh, I'm asking a great deal of you—"

MacDermott struck the table with his fist.

"You're asking more than you know! You're asking me to let the woman I love think I'm a scoundrel, and you—"

"She's a woman," shouted Furlong, "and if her conscience is strong, so is her heart; and that's bound to me by a thousand endearing habits! If you refuse to make this sacrifice for me, I shall tell her the truth; but she won't cast me off. We may be estranged for a time, but she'll come back to me. If you think differently, it's because in your heart of hearts you believe that if she casts me off there will be a chance for you."

MacDermott started, and stared down at the papers on

the table. It was the one remark likely to shake him. There was a long pause, and then Furlong went on:

"It isn't as if any one would know. I have a check for Richard covering everything he's lost by us—by me. No one knows but the five of us—"

"She is the one that counts," MacDermott said. "I loved her before you ever saw her. She can't think of me as brilliant or well-born or rich, but she did believe in me, and you want me to let her think I am a common swindler!"

"If you think this is comfortable for me—I declare, I don't care which way you decide!"

"Oh yes, you do," said Hugh, bitterly. "If I let you go scot-free, you'll be smug and self-righteous as ever inside of a month—"

Furlong strode forward a pace.

"Hugh, you've no reason to believe in me, but I swear to you by all I hold sacred, by her, that this is my last dishonest act—my last. I'll refer every doubtful act to her—"

MacDermott paced up and down the room. Would Moira wish to be undeceived in Furlong? Would she not marry him under any circumstances? It is so easy to find excuses for those we love. And if she did not marry Furlong, she would have to meet the fact of a broken engagement; she would have to work again, and her sister and nephew were almost dependent on her. Mrs. Servan was dying, and Moira would have to face the rebuffs and humiliations. No, he could face deprivation and poverty for himself, but not for her. He would rather have her cherish a false belief in Furlong than be thrown, defenceless, on her own resources.

"Look here," he said, "I can't make my final decision now. Let those who know think for the present that I did it, but if I make up my mind any time before the wedding that it's best to tell her, I'm going to do it."

"You see, don't you, that if you let it go now it 'll be hard to make her believe later on?"

"I know the risk. How punctilious you are of a sudden! I'd make her believe. I'd get Servan to tell what he knows. If he thought the truth was vital to her, he's grateful enough to tell her."

Furlong sat down wearily.

"I'm tired out. I wish I'd never begun it all."

As they sat in silence they heard the sound of a noisy voice in the hall.

"Isn't that Dickie?" asked MacDermott, starting to his feet. "His room's next yours."

They could hear another amused voice soothing Dickie. Immediately a knock sounded at the door. Furlong opened it, and a smiling reporter on a paper friendly to Furlong entered, supporting Dickie.

"Good-evening, governor," said the young man. "I found this young chap in a saloon weeping out some awful slander about you and Mr. MacDermott to a reporter of a rival paper."

"Oh, you cub!" said Furlong, pleasantly. "It was good of you to bring him home," he added, to the reporter.

Dickie was still partly drunk.

"And you, too, MacDermott," he said, "that my peculiar papa trusted—"

"The truth is," said Furlong, "that our young friend here hasn't a head for business, and, as he is a minor, I invested

part of his property for him in bonds—gas and light bonds. He ought to have known it—young fly-away!"

He looked amiably at Dickie, and added:

"But his manners have really been rather insufferable, and I've sold the bonds back to Mr. Servan. I think Mr. MacDermott and I will let this ungrateful young man, who is just about of age, manage his own business affairs in the future."

He took Servan's check from his pocket, holding it carelessly so that the reporter could see the signature. Then he replaced it in his pocket.

"On second thought I'll keep this till the morning. Our young friend is still sufficiently tipsy to light a pipe with it."

"Rotten forgery," muttered Dickie, "like the Garden West stock you worked off on me."

Furlong turned his back contemptuously.

"He's been talking, you say?"

The reporter nodded.

"Slopped over quite a bit, but maybe it 'll be all right."

"Of course it will," said Furlong, following the young man to the door; "you can fix it for us. In a day or two this young chap will be calling up all the men he knows to apologize for any slander he may have uttered. Good-bye, and don't ever take a ward to bring up."

When he had shut the door on the reporter he turned back to Hugh.

"The opposition papers will get hold of it," he said, anxiously. "Richard's mouth can be shut with the check. People know his father left bonds with us for him, and that we've bought bonds—"

"If you're plotting more things against me," said Dickie, fatuously, "I'll set my brother-in-law on you. He's all right, he is; just as soon as the honeymoon was over he began to investigate—"

"You come to bed," said Furlong.

He dragged Dickie up by the arm, led him into his own room, turned on the electric light, dropped him on his bed, and then went out, taking the key with him and locking the door on the outside.

When he went back to MacDermott he said:

"I'll go into his room as soon as it's light. He'll be sober then, and I'll arrange the thing with him."

"If you can make him believe in us again you'll be achieving considerable," said Hugh, drearily.

"He's got to act like it, anyhow," said Furlong.

"That's all you care about nowadays, Furlong—appearances."

"If it eases you any, Hugh, to say bitter and truthful things to me, I'm glad," said Furlong, humbly.

MacDermott dropped his head.

"Oh, Henry," he said, unconsciously calling the man he had loved by his Christian name, "if only you two, you and she, my two dearest, had not been concerned!"

He went out clumsily. For a time Furlong was wretched over the effect of his confession. Then he began to think of himself and Moira. Suppose Callahan kept his threat; would not Moira believe Callahan, especially since she had said that MacDermott must come to her and say that he was the one who had wronged Ames? He could not understand why, since she loved him, she was willing to give MacDermott a chance. And he had not asked his friend

to go to her and accuse himself. Under the circumstances it had not been possible. As Furlong turned uneasily on his bed that night he decided that he must risk something. Perhaps Mrs. Servan's illness would shelter Moira from Callahan for a while. Certainly he could not ask MacDermott to go to Moira; he must meet Moira's expectancy with some reasonable excuse.

The next morning, mindful of his intentions toward Dickie, Furlong rose early and went to the boy's room. He gave him Servan's check, which somehow seemed to the susceptible Dickie to put him in the wrong. Then he talked so sharply and convincingly that after breakfast Dickie called on Moira and apologized. He had scarcely left her when Furlong was announced. He answered at once the question which her face asked.

"I saw MacDermott last night," he said. "It is as I thought. There are circumstances you know nothing about. There was no attempt to rob Richard—"

"It must all be explained to me fully," she said—"in every detail."

"And it shall. Not to-day, however; I am unexpectedly called to Springfield on the morning train."

"Did you give Mr. MacDermott my message?"

"I did not."

"Why not?"

"Because, for one thing, when I first spoke to him he was so overcome that he couldn't have borne to hear of the—the humiliation you demanded."

"A humiliation?"

"It can't be a chance of justification," he said, sharply. "You don't distrust my word? He may be responsible for

the blunder—mind, it is not dishonesty—but—you take my word?"

She bent her head a little, but made no reply.

"Later," went on Furlong, "when there might have been an opportunity, people came in. But he is going to Springfield, of course, and then—"

"You will both be back at the end of the week?"

"Undoubtedly. He will be back before that, working on this judgeship matter."

He rose.

"I must go almost immediately and do some work at the office before I take the train. But you seem so reserved, so—won't you be your old self for a moment with me, darling?"

Moira raised her eyes wearily to his.

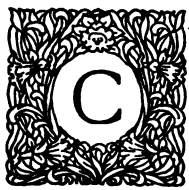
"I wish you wouldn't ask it, Henry. I am so upset about Mrs. Servan and—and other things. I can't stand any more drain on my feelings. My nerves are gone to pieces. I am wooden to-day."

"I'm sorry, dear," he said; "but I shall hope that next Saturday, when I'm back, you'll feel better."

After he had gone Moira went up-stairs to Mrs. Servan's rooms. All day long she sat by a window. Outside, pulsing life rushed by on the street. The wind of early spring entered and brought the sounds of birds and the odor of young buds, and all day long Mrs. Servan's life ebbed, until, just at twilight, with her hand in Moira's, she turned her face to her husband and died.

XXIX

A CHICKEN OF CALLAHAN'S COMES HOME TO ROOST



CALLAHAN, smoking his pipe and consuming raisins while Mrs. Haraghey poured on him fluent monologues, brooded over the time when he had best tell Moira what he knew of Furlong. He had purposely permitted three or four days to pass after her return from Kilmanan.

"Isn't it true, Mrs. Haraghey," he had asked, "that when a woman 'ain't seen a man for some time, she's that glad, if she likes him, that she has no sense at all?"

"'Tis so, indade," agreed Mrs. Haraghey; "he could swear the English was Irish, and she'd take it from him. For why, John?"

"For information," said Callahan.

So he allowed for the passing of the first glow. Then he heard of Mrs. Servan's fatal illness. He knew Moira's affection for her, and he waited till after her death and burial.

"Because," he reflected, "it 'd be cruel to tell her now, and who knows but her heart would be that soft she'd just sympathize with Furlong—no telling."

Servan he did not see at all except for a brief visit of

condolence, and that was the more generous of him, as he wanted to get Servan's help in pushing Hugh's claims for the judgeship of the juvenile court. The election was but a few days off, and Callahan knew the value of never feeling sure of winning till the election returns were in.

Some paragraphs in the opposition papers containing a veiled accusation of dishonesty on MacDermott's part puzzled him. Callahan never became infuriated till he had done his thinking. One passage spoke ironically of the value of having a trust so loosely given that it could be violated, a friend so easily pleased that words were as good for him as bonds. Callahan telephoned for Mayme, who obeyed the summons and was closeted with him alone, to Mrs. Haraghey's disgust.

"What do you know, Mayme?" he asked, after he had laid the case before her.

But Mayme could tell him nothing, except that Servan had drawn a check for twenty-five thousand dollars payable to Dickie Ames. She had done her best to question Dickie, but he had chosen to be reticent.

"There's one thing I can do, Uncle John," said Mayme: "I can go down to Springfield and ask Hugh point-blank to tell me."

"That's the ticket!" said Callahan. "I hoped you'd offer. I can't leave here. Oh, well," he added, gloomily, "you can depend on Hugh not to give Furlong away. I don't know at all; the thing worries me."

Mayme took the night train to Springfield. In the morning, after a good breakfast, she went to the state-house. Entering the hall of representatives, she took a seat in the visitor's enclosure and looked about for Hugh. When it

was time to open she saw him come in from the back and take the Speaker's chair. Her heart swelled with pride. She listened all morning with admiration at the way he conducted the proceedings. He did not see her till the morning session was over, and then only because she walked quickly down the side of the room to intercept him before he could leave by the back entrance. Then he showed surprise, but not, as she sadly noted, any particular pleasure. They walked together to the hotel, and went to a retired parlor on the second floor. Then Mayme burst out:

"I've not yet told you the real reason why I'm here. I saw that hint in the paper, and I know that Dickie thinks you've done something to him, and I came down here to tell you, Hugh, that you never did it. You're squarer than the squarest person I ever imagined."

He smiled at her affectionately.

"Dear Mayme, nothing can shake your faith, can it?"

"Why, anybody that knows you would believe in you," she said; "even that silly Dickie half does."

He glanced at her quickly; evidently she did not know that Moira was concerned.

"Not everybody thinks so much of me as you do, Mayme," he said. "It takes affection to believe without proof."

"The papers have made me wild," she said; "of course, we can't ask Servan to do anything now. He's for you in this election business because Callahan wants him to be; but—"

"Oh, the talk won't make me lose the election; it's lost, anyhow."

"I don't believe it. That Furlong—"

"Never mind Furlong."

"Have the people been talking about it here—in the House?" she asked.

MacDermott winced. Some of the members, jealous of his prominence as Speaker, had tried to make capital of the accusations.

"Oh, never mind," he said, again.

Mayme put her hand on his arm.

"Old comrade," she said, tenderly, "I don't ask much, do I? But won't you confide this in me? It might do you good."

His heart was sore, and her trust in him was sweet, and she had come two hundred miles to tell him of it. He was not by nature particularly reticent, and his long weeks and months of repression had marred his self-control. He told the story of the transaction, except the fact that Jenkens had accused him, and before Moira. Even knowing but half the story, Mayme felt that he was shielding Furlong for Moira's sake. She concentrated her feeling on Furlong.

"U'm!" she said, "and he bolsters up his reputation at your expense? The unspeakable hypocrite!"

She felt that she was being very ladylike, indeed. What she wanted to say was, "I'd like to scratch his face, the smooth devil!"

They lunched and dined together, and spent as many hours in between as Hugh could spare. The relaxation did him good, and they were both happier when she took the evening train for home.

All the next morning she was too busy with Servan's affairs to make any report to Callahan. About five in the afternoon she went over to Callahan's weather-beaten house,

and informed Mrs. Haraghey that she had come to see Callahan and to stay to supper.

"Supper you can have," said Mrs. Haraghey, in a worried voice, "but if John 'll see you, I dinnaw. What's come over him, I dinnaw. There he sits in the office and the door locked. Niver since I've been in the house—and that's twenty-two year now, jist befure Hugh came—niver has that door been locked."

"Well, you go on and cook a dish of cabbage for him," said Mayme, cheerfully. "I'll try my luck."

She went down the passage to the office and knocked, saying:

"It's me, Mayme—Uncle John."

When he opened the door Mayme drew in her breath. The man that confronted her was Callahan with, as Mrs. Haraghey would have said, the red heart gone out of him. He looked pale and slack-chested and, for the first time in Mayme's experience, old.

"What's gone wrong, Uncle John?" she cried, as he locked the door after her. "The ward—have you lost money?"

"Richer than ever, richer than ever," he croaked. "I've just lost a thrifle that money can't buy. I take it you've not read the evening papers yet?"

She shook her head.

"I've not had time," she said.

"I'll read you a bit of the gentlest wan. 'It came to pass that a young man rose up in the Western End, and he said unto the elders of the tribe: "Go to—I will seek for a judgeship, even for the judgeship that guards the infants of the tribes of Judea." And they said unto him: "What token can you show that you are worthy of the judgeship?" And

he made many answers, and he said: "Lo, I am fit to guard these infants; have not I and my brother in the law tended an infant in our gates—yea, from his youth up? Call, then, this infant." But, behold, when the infant was called he gnashed his teeth on the young man, and he said: "I trusted thee—yea, for many moons I trusted thee—and thou tookest the fair lands that my father had left me and my sister, and didst sell them before the synagogue. And a slave of thine didst buy in the land for a few talents of silver, and thou didst sell it again for many talents." Then the judges—'"

Callahan dashed down the paper.

"I can't go on; and the others is worse," he said.

"Good Lord!" breathed Mayme; "that devil Furlong! But will Hugh lose—"

"Will he lose it? Well, if you'd been hustling as I have since these papers is out, you'd know how quick a scandal can ruin a reformer. If he's suspected, he's hit at harder than anny gray wolf. Sure he'll lose it."

"Well, Uncle John, he's the Speaker, anyway. Besides, if it's a satisfaction to you to hear it, Hugh doesn't care much whether this trick is turned for him or not."

Callahan beat on the table with his clinched fists.

"D'ye think I care about the judgeship?" he asked. "Is the cunning gone out of me that I couldn't get my bye a better toy than that wan of these days? It's the shame —the shame—"

Mayme stared at him.

"Good Lord, Uncle John!" she said, frankly; "this that they've said about Hugh is kind, Christian words to what they've said about you—"

He turned away from her impatiently.

"I'm not thinking about myself—or, yes, I am, too much, too much. It's my bye's name blackened, and for my fault, for my fault!"

Dimly Mayme understood the irony of Callahan's position.

"Go off, now, and lave me to myself," he said, drearily. "I'm not fit to look anny wan in the eyes. He was my eye's model, and I tried to corrupt him, and I did corrupt him. And now, through that, 'tis my own bye gets smirched—"

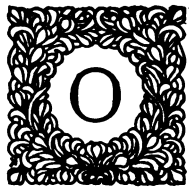
Very gently Mayme unlocked the door and passed out to the kitchen, where Mrs. Haraghey stood listening with haunted face.

"Is he sick, and what is it at all?" she whispered.

"Soul sick, and that's the truth. I never expected to see John Callahan fit for none to lean on."

XXX

MOIRA'S WORLD TREMBLES



ON the same day that Hugh lost the election Servan shuffled into the hotel where Moira had gone to live with Ida.

"Here's a newspaper hinting that Senator Cartwright is at death's door and that Furlong may be his successor. You know all about that, hey? And here's a ticket to a big, home-like place in the country that Mrs. Servan used to like, where they take good care of you, and I want you to go. I had to make all the arrangements or you might not have consented. She would have liked it, and you're tired out."

Moira accepted gratefully, and with the hope that Ida would accompany her. But Ida promptly refused.

"The country in America!" she cried. "No, Moira! If there are so few resources in your cities, whatever should I do in the country? Besides, Artie's nurse wouldn't stay; she's picked up a lot of independence already from American servants."

Moira found the house in the country a semi-sanatorium. At first she merely took care of herself: she ate and slept and walked, and tried not to think of any one she had left behind her. But as she grew stronger she began to think

of herself, and of Furlong and MacDermott. She read the newspapers, and saw with a kind of detached interest what Furlong's letters had already told her: that he was working to be the late Senator Cartwright's successor. Later came the account of his nomination.

Did she love Furlong? she asked. The answer was that her love was held in abeyance because she did not know him. She was beginning to be aware that a man need not be expressed by his career. She knew Furlong's clean record, the esteem in which he was held. She realized that he made a good appearance, though perhaps socially he was a little too elaborate. That would be quite enough for an Englishman. But she had always said that her own marriage must be different from those which her cousins had made. As county families were few in Ireland, the range of choice was limited. People seemed to marry largely to hold certain estates together, without any thought of adaptability. The estates were so big, she reflected, with a smile, that people could be separated enough to avoid friction.

American married people, however, lived more intimately; they were more careful about considering temperament and congeniality; they instinctively gave themselves the right of choosing. She had supposed that she was choosing, but had she not been guided largely by expediency and attracted largely by externals? She had, perhaps, mistaken her ardent interest in what Furlong was doing for an ardent interest in the man himself? When she remembered his face, however, her heart beat faster. She could not say she did not love him, but she was determined to know him better before she married him.

And MacDermott! She knew that his love was more perfect than Furlong's. Once she had resented that, because it seemed in some way to rob Furlong. Now she knew that a man's love is the highest expression of his character. MacDermott's love was so great that it deserved justice, if only for the very reason that it was unavailing. Here, too, she felt that she had been judging by externals. Compared to Furlong, MacDermott was inconspicuous politically, or had been when she had met him; he was self-effacing, and so she had not appreciated him. She sometimes wondered if she had not been subconsciously influenced by the fact of his peasant blood. Once she had caught herself reflecting that she was glad he had not been born in Kilmanan, as Callahan had.

So far her analysis had been sure. What made her uncomfortable was that she must hear MacDermott confess with his own lips that if a wrong had been done Dickie Ames, he was responsible. For the most part, she kept her mind away from this part of her problem. Furlong's letters were perfect, and by degrees their pictures of the life-to-be in Washington caught her imagination. In that cosmopolitan city she saw herself once more connected with the great world from which she came. Then Furlong proved himself thoughtful in little ways. At one time he would speak of a toy he had got for little Arthur; at another he spoke of having seen a house that he knew Ida would like. Gradually the tone of her own letters grew warmer. She felt sure that when she had learned to read Furlong better all would go well.

Toward the end of her stay there flashed through her mind a circumstance she had forgotten. Furlong had

seemed unwilling when she had suggested that they take Jenkens with them to their new home. Why was that? Moira refused to pursue the thought further, but it filled her with a kind of terror. The uncertainty, the unrest she had felt in the city came back, and with it an impatience of suspense. She must return; she must learn Furlong to the core, and be forever rid of any reservations toward him.

Yet she delayed her departure until the very day of the election. Then a letter from Furlong, full of wounded feeling, struck her with remorse; she must go to him. She reached the city in the middle of the afternoon, and sent her trunk to the hotel. She was about to follow it when she was moved by a sudden distaste for the hotel and all it stood for. She felt alien; she longed for Kilmanan, and then, instinctively, she turned her steps toward the two who also loved Kilmanan: Callahan and Mrs. Haraghey.

Callahan was out, but Mrs. Haraghey dusted a chair for her, and after inquiries for her own health, and that of Lady Grey and the governor, the old lady told of the state of her own and Callahan's.

"'Tis Callahan 'll be sorry to miss you, miss," she said. "He does be asking Hugh every day if you've got home yet. I doubt he wants to see you."

"And—and Mr. MacDermott," Moira asked—"how is he?"

Mrs. Haraghey's long upper lip trembled.

"Ah, him!" she said. "Well, miss, I sit here on my four bones and watch the soul of him spilling like skim-milk. It's not well wid the lad—well it is not. Befure I know it I find myself talkin' to John Callahan as if Hugh were not

here—as if he'd left the stony bed of this cold worrld entirely—"

Mrs. Haraghey put her apron to her eyes and wept.

"There, there," said Moira, "he is just tired, and half the world is tired, Mrs. Haraghey."

"I kape thinkin' of him when he was a little lad," sighed Mrs. Haraghey; "niver a bit of trouble was he, and always so thoughtful. Did I say I wish I had so and so, if 'twas widin reason at all, 'twas him would save the money he got sellin' papers and buy it. And as for John—sure, befure John knew what he wanted himself, the bye had gone and done it for him!"

"He is always kind," murmured Moira.

"You'd think," said Mrs. Haraghey, passionately, "that the bye's own goodness and Callahan's power together would kape quickness in his eye and lightness in his step; but throuble drags heavy at his heart, and the soul of him has gone aged. 'Tis wan of two things will happen, miss: he'll die, or he'll see things here is too harrud for him, and then John Callahan and him and me 'll go to Kilmanan and nurse back his young heart for him."

"Oh, Kilmanan!" whispered Moira.

She saw its crooked, dust-swept street with the green hills beyond as a haven of peace calling her. And in the background were Callahan and Mrs. Haraghey—and MacDermott.

Callahan had not come back when she took her leave. She dined alone down-town, and then drove to the hotel. All the commonplace little incidents of the evening that followed seemed to her curiously familiar: Ida's talk of being bored was as if fresh in her ears; Dickie's gossip

about Servan and Ida and Mayme a distasteful repetition. As Mayme walked toward her, settling her hat and buttoning her jacket, Moira had an odd sense of the reality of her appearance. Never before had she so realized Mayme's walk and smile. It seemed to her that she already knew that Mayme was going to the theatre with MacDermott and Callahan.

It seemed natural, too, that Furlong should not be there. He was down-town watching the coming in of the election returns. Moira had scarcely ever known such a keen sense of living. As the people of the hotel came and went, and the reception-rooms gradually emptied, she was aware of every tick of the blood in her heart. The very walls about her seemed alive. What passed within them went on in sharp outlines; her very thoughts were as keen of definition as the figures of men walking in blinding light. She was not nervous, but she had a strange sense of waiting, and yet the time did not seem long.

Only she and Ida were in the reception-room when Furlong returned, Servan with him. Before they could close the door, Mayme came in with MacDermott and Callahan. She had not expected them to enter with her, but Callahan pushed his way in, his hand on MacDermott's arm. Furlong had time to cast an annoyed glance at them, but when he saw Moira he forgot everything. He rushed toward her and took her in his arms. MacDermott saw her face, and it seemed to him that it was eager, ardent; his heart fell in utter misery.

"Hit it off well, don't they?" said Servan to Mayme. "Well—" And he sighed.

Mayme went up-stairs, and while Ida swept over to Fur-

long, smiling, Moira tore herself from his embrace, aware that he had not come in alone. Looking up, she saw Callahan and MacDermott. Callahan's face was grim and crimson; MacDermott's was white and gaunt. Moira had never seen such a heart-broken look. It was a wounded, soul-sick look, but she could see no shame in it. She remembered what Mrs. Haraghey had told her of him, of his childhood, when he read the books of Irish lore and dreamed of his heroes. And here he was, an unwilling captive to love and sorrow. He had loved her so well, he had been so devoted to Furlong—

Impulsively she went to him. She did not know that she had given him her hands till Callahan spoke.

"Ay," said he, in a hoarse voice, "look at him, then! Is he a man to rob young Ames? I didn't mean to speak this night to you; 'tis too much like the Bijou Theatre now that me bould Henry is just at the top of his wave. But you ask Furlong how he lied and cheated to get out of vetoing Servan's bill! And you ask him how he stole young Ames's property, and let Hugh here take the blame—"

Moira put her hands to her ears. She stared at the two men. In the moment before she found her voice much time seemed to her to have passed; yet no one spoke; nothing altered. Ida had been smoothing the ribbon of her gown; she had not yet rippled her fingers down its full length. Furlong's mouth was compressed in a white line. Hugh had not changed a muscle of his face.

"Henry! Mr. MacDermott!" she cried. "Did you—did he—"

MacDermott remembered only her ardent look at Furlong, and that above all things he wanted her to be happy,

and he did not care how. He would not compromise with truth for his own happiness, but he would take any means to give her hers. He would shame Callahan and himself, if that must be the price. Since she loved Furlong, let her keep her faith in him.

"No," he said, in even tones; "Uncle John does not understand. Yes, it was I—all my fault."

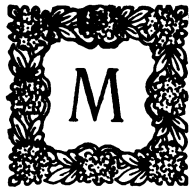
Ida still smoothed the soft ribbon of her gown. Furlong drew a long, gasping breath. Callahan's face remained crimson; his mouth was open, grotesquely, as if his face in its anger had been frozen into a mask. It was only when MacDermott turned and went toward the door with Callahan that Moira knew how much she wanted to believe in him. Outside, Callahan drew a long breath and looked up at the stars.

"Forgive me," said MacDermott. "Uncle John, I couldn't help it; she cares—"

"Well," said Callahan, "you lost me the trick I was going to turn against Furlong for you. Maybe 'tis deserved. Begor, I left my hat inside! God bless you, annyway, Hugh!"

XXXI

MOIRA PICKS UP THE PIECES



MOIRA turned wearily to Furlong.

"Dearest, don't be hard on him," he said, his heart beating wildly, now that the difficult moment had passed. "I will explain; he is hardly to blame. But put it out of your mind now. Think! Think what has come to us!"

He was excited, handsome.

"Oh, Henry, I must go to my room," she said, at the point of tears, and, without looking at him, she hastened to the staircase.

On the first landing, however, she reflected that she had been inconsiderate to him, even unkind. Surely in this hour of triumph she should be at his side. And why had she left him? Just because she was hurt that a man who had said that she had inspired whatever nobility there was in him had failed her—a man she did not love!

She put her fingers in her ears as if to shut out her terrifying thoughts, and hastily went down-stairs. She must at least say a few words to Furlong. At the foot of the staircase she paused. Furlong was standing in the music-room talking animatedly to Ida.

"Wasn't that man Callahan's face quaint to look at?" laughed Ida. "Quite like a bit of ugly, carved stone. He looked as if he had been drinking. By-the-way, you should have a good, stiff peg yourself; you must be dead."

"I *am* tired," said Furlong; "but I don't drink, you know. Wish I had a cup of tea, such as you brewed for me this afternoon."

"Rather out of the question at this hour," yawned Ida. "But do tell me about your evening. Wasn't it all tremendously exciting?"

"I wasn't excited; indeed, I was just quietly amused in watching the face of the chap that took the returns in my office. When he said the numbers he twisted his lower lip as if it were being dragged down over his jaw with pincers. And hot! the room was an inferno!"

Moira saw the two with a dreadful clearness. It was as if their souls had come outside and enwrapped them as definitely as their bodies. Not ten minutes ago the man who had proved himself Furlong's best friend had passed the keenest crisis of his life. The most incurious spectator would have known that it was a vital crisis. Furlong had seen his friend's face as he confessed his shame to the woman he loved. Yet in his feeling it was as if nothing had happened. He was callous and shallow. Competent he might be, and made for success as the world measures it, yet again and again she had judged his standards and found them wanting.

And Ida, slight of soul and worldly, all her emotions were on the surface; the fear of discomfort was as strong in her as Moira had supposed the fear of dishonor was in MacDermott. Although MacDermott had failed her, at

least he knew her ideals, understood them, and she believed had only stumbled, somehow, for the moment. Suddenly Callahan's face came before her, and with no kind of surprise she found herself thinking of him as, after all, the best man she knew. Perhaps her sense of values was confused, she reflected, but never again could Callahan occur to her mind with the old connotation; he would always stand to her for loyalty and enduring love.

She looked down again on Ida and Furlong, still talking interestedly. No doubt Furlong loved her—but he could be very happy in talking about himself to Ida. No; she was not needed to-night; she could go to bed.

She did not see Furlong again till late the next day. So much of life was simply going through the motions, she reflected, morbidly, as she sat at one of the little tables with him and Ida, and talked of a new play and an old book. It was all very concrete—Ida's beautiful shoulders rising from a lavender crêpe bodice, Furlong's vivid face, the array of silver with the light striking across it, the drifts of talk and laughter from the other tables, and Jenkens quietly serving her. All very concrete, and yet nothing was very real.

Afterward she and Furlong went for a drive. He handled the reins well; he knew that he looked his best when he was behind horses, and, in spite of his perturbation, he enjoyed the exhilaration of the rapid motion.

Moira soon came directly to the point.

"Henry," she said, "I wish you to know that I do not love you, but I am willing to marry you."

He did not look at her for a few minutes. Suddenly to him the whole scene seemed unreal—the beat of the

horses' hoofs, the long, swinging electric lights, and her words.

"This is a compromise," Moira said. "I should not marry where I do not love, but I have Ida to think of, and I still like you very much, and am as keenly interested as ever in your career."

"But why? But why?" said Furlong.

"It did not come on me suddenly," she said, "and yet it did. I was rather sure till last night that I loved you, though I ought to have known I didn't. I should have known that my restlessness, my—my coldness, were warnings, but I took my real liking for you and my interest in what you are doing for something warmer."

"You are only angry now, are you not, Moira?" he pleaded. "It is a temporary hardness—"

She shook her head.

"No; if I had loved you when I saw you last night I should have suffered. But I was—merely disgusted."

"You speak plainly," he said.

"I must, if we are to go on at all," she returned, steadily. "I must take you hereafter on a lower level. I do like you—"

"You must love me," he urged. "It is not like you to marry without love."

"I thought so once, but there are so many reasons for marrying—"

Her words trailed off into silence; then she added:

"You see, I can speak very logically to you, because I have thought things over so thoroughly. I am sure I can be more useful to you and Ida and myself if I marry you—"

"It is unbelievable!"

"If any one had told me a month ago that I should be saying this, I should not have believed," she said; "but I've found something in myself since yesterday that's hard and steadfast—"

"Oh, Moira, I know I'm not worthy, but I'll try, and you'll love me again—"

She stopped him.

"There, Henry, is the element I deplore. You will keep hoping that I shall love you. My conviction is that I shall not."

Furlong was holding the reins listlessly.

"What does my career matter—what do I care about the Senatorship when you can say this to me?" he asked.

"I'm doing the best I can, Henry," sighed Moira. "I'm quite uncertain how you'll take my suggestion—"

"Can you doubt that I'd want you on any terms? Perhaps in time—"

"Don't build on the future, Henry," she said, gently. "Let us be as kind to each other as we can. One's self does not matter much."

"Ah, you've always lived according to that," he said, "and perhaps if I had—" He turned the horses homeward. "It's a hard thing to face," he said, "and every one expecting me to be so glorified—and it must have cost you something, too."

He always thought first of himself, she mused; and next moment he said:

"I've become too absorbed in my own affairs. You must help me, Moira. I want to be worthy of you, but I'm not strong enough to give you up. I'm not strong enough for that, no matter what I have to sacrifice."

She thought of MacDermott, who had asked so little—and who had failed her, after all. Then she said:

"We are all weak; we all compromise, and I don't want to judge any one else's weakness. We must just do the best we can."

"I think I shall go back to Springfield to-morrow," he said, after a pause. "I'll have to take some time to get used to this."

At the door he hesitated, but she held up her face.

"Good-night, dear," she said; "it won't be so bad."

He watched her until she closed the door, and then he drove the horses to their stable and walked home. Through the spring streets strong life was pulsing about him. Young people were strolling with close-locked arms; sounds of laughter or the tinkle of guitar and mandolin came to him from drawing-rooms and porches; here and there the red disk of a cigar glowed from the shadows. Happiness, even content—he felt a poignant longing for them. Here they were in the land of the living, a lure for all men—a bitter reproach to a man who had lost them because of his own unworthiness.

XXXII

MISS BROOMER WITHDRAWS

THE morning after Furlong's election Mrs. Haraghey was awakened by the sound of joyous laughter from MacDermott's room.

"Sure the senator must have promised him something grand that he's awake so arly," she grumbled.

Then, as the laughter continued, her face grew troubled. She dressed hastily and went into MacDermott's room. He did not know her; he was talking of knights and forests, dim roads and the Kilmanan orchard. She called to Callahan to telephone for a doctor, and then she went back to MacDermott and listened to further ravings of Kilmanan and Moira, and Furlong and Moira, and always through the broken sentences ran a painful note of trouble.

When the doctor came and made his examination, he said, briefly, to Callahan:

"I may stave off an attack of brain-fever if I have luck." Then, as Mrs. Haraghey appeared with a cup of tea, he cried: "For goodness' sake, send off that lunatic that wants to poison him, and sit with him yourself till the nurse comes!"

Callahan put his big, cool hand on his boy's forehead and looked into the empty eyes.

"If he dies," he whispered—"if he dies, I'll have Furlong's blood for it!"

And then, till the nurse came, he crooned to MacDermott, with the tears running down his face: "'Oh, Paddy, dear, and did you hear the news that's goin' round?'"

Later in the day Mrs. Haraghey, after many vain efforts to reach Mayme on the telephone, at last managed to find her. She whimpered an incoherent tale of Hugh and brain-fever and a nurse that was packing ice on him and killing him entirely, and would Mayme come and put her in her place?

Mayme called up Callahan to hear the real details. She knew she would not be allowed to see MacDermott, nor did she care to have Callahan or Mrs. Haraghey know how much she wanted to see him. So, though her heart ached, she went back to her hotel after her day of work in Servan's office.

Dickie Ames met her, and when he commented on her worried face she told him of MacDermott's sickness.

"Well, gee!" said Dickie, "I don't wonder, poor chap; he's a lot on his mind."

In a rush of confidence he told her of the scene between Moira, Jenkens, Furlong, and himself. But all she said was:

"Oh, well; it's too late, I guess. I don't think I want any dinner."

Settling her hat and adjusting her veil, she went into the street and then over to the lake where she and MacDermott had so often walked together—when he was thinking of Moira and trying to be good to Mayme.

"Oh, I ought to tell her!" Mayme cried. "She ought

to know that Furlong's a scoundrel and that Hugh isn't, no matter how much Hugh wants to shield her, or why."

After a week she went over to Callahan's to see MacDermott. Callahan and Mrs. Haraghey had united in a conspiracy of tireless devotion that had had no effect whatever on the patient. Day by day he seemed to grow weaker. He lay utterly still, hour after hour, with his eyes shut. When Mayme entered the house the doctor was on the stairs.

"Reminds me," he said, in answer to her questions, "of a case I had in Venice, where the man died of sheer inanition. Doesn't seem to care whether school keeps or not; doesn't assimilate his food. But we'll rouse him yet."

As Mayme began to reply, Callahan came out of his office with a telegram in his broad hand. His pink, anxious face wore a whimsical smile.

"Read here," he said to Mayme, "for Hugh, and if that don't make you think the Sunday-schools is right—"

She read it, gasped, and handed it to the doctor.

"That ought to rouse him," she said.

"Whew!" he whistled. "Go in and tell him."

Mayme entered quietly and knelt by Hugh's bed.

"Hugh," she said; "listen to me, Hugh, dear."

He opened his eyes and gave her a faint semblance of his queer, twisted smile.

"Dear, I've news for you—great news. Old Mr. Trent has been killed—the lieutenant-governor—"

"Poor old Trent," he murmured; "nice fellow—"

"But, don't you see, dear? By law, you're governor. Think of what's before you! Oh, Hugh, Hugh! To think you're beginning to get what you're worth!"

He shut his eyes. Far, far away was a vision of a dream child who read of knights and heroes whose deeds he was to emulate, and of a dear lady with slim hands who was to comfort him after his battles; and another vision of a bright-eyed youth looking for a work in the world—a way to carve, a deed to do, a city to help, a class to bring to self-consciousness. And—

"Oh, Mayme," he said, "I'm so sorry, but I don't care!"

"No, you're too sick," she said, brightly; "but you will, dear. Think of the power; think what you'll do for the people—for our own ward, Hugh! I'm so happy for you!"

"I'm just numb," he sighed. "I can't care; I haven't the head for politics any more. I—can't."

"Oh, you will, dear."

He turned away his head.

"Nothing matters," he said, lifelessly. "Do I have to talk, Mayme?"

She pressed his forehead with her cool hands, and then she left him. Without a word to Callahan or Mrs. Haraghey she went straight to the hotel and sought Moira. She found her standing at her bedroom door.

"Are you going anywhere?" asked Mayme, in a dull tone.

"I was going out. Mr. Furlong—but he will be glad to wait if there is anything— Won't you come in? You look ill."

"Oh, I've been sick almost ever since you came to this country," said Mayme, drearily. She sank into a rocking-chair and swayed violently.

"I can't just think of the words I ought to say," she went on, "so you'll forgive me if I'm more blunt than polite.

The amount of it is this: From what Hugh MacDermott told me and made me promise not to tell, and what I got out of Mr. Servan yesterday, I know absolutely that Mr. Furlong has lied to you. It was he who took Dickie's money and used it for campaign expenses—"

"But he told me—Mr. MacDermott—that he—"

"Then he lied, too," said Mayme, "so that you could have nothing to hold up against Furlong. I guess he loves you well enough to swear to anything for your sake."

"If it's true—"

"*If* it's true! Look here, we're standing woman to woman, without the need of a rag of conventionality between us. I'm breaking my word to him because I love him better than anything in the world, and because it's killing him that you —and you know he loves *you* better than anything in the world. All my devotion don't make him want to live. At the bottom of your soul, Moira Carew, do you think it's not true?"

"It's true, and it was to save me—"

They looked straight into each other's eyes for a moment, each utterly unaware of the surroundings. The simple room might have been a desert, might have been the cloudless blue of the sky; the one reality to each was that there was no shred of reserve between them.

"You might have known he loved you like that!" cried poor Mayme. "I'm sorry if I've done anything that hurts you—if it turns you against Mr. Furlong—if— But as Mr. Servan said to me yesterday, you can't be very anxious to marry him or you'd be doing it. But I like you well enough not to want to—"

"You've done me no wrong. What do I matter? The

important thing is to have righted him. Oh, I should have known! I begin to think of proofs, but I should have felt—"

"I knew," said Mayme. "I was born in a two-room shack, and my father couldn't read or write, and I never met a lady till I knew you—but I knew, I knew!"

Moira bent over her suddenly and kissed her.

"Miss Broomer, I love and admire you from the bottom of my heart. You may be happy, you and he."

"Don't you think it," said Mayme, sadly. "You see, at first I was a sort of comfort to him. If he hadn't had me to depend on he'd have taken to drink or something. I mean, if a man's going to have high ideals he must have something to bolster him. The amount of it is, I've kept him fit for you to think of."

"But in time—" Moira dropped her head.

"Oh, that was what I had hoped," said Mayme, breaking into tears at last; "and I've worked so hard for the last two years to make myself fit for him—you don't know how I've tried. And it's no use. He just can't forget you, and all the strength of will I've got can't make him even want to live. Oh, why couldn't it have been me—not you!"

"Why, indeed," said Moira, bitterly; "you've made a sacrifice bigger than I have ever made in my life—than I am capable of."

"But not big enough—that's certain," said Mayme.

Moira comforted her as best she could.

"Lie on my bed," she said, at last; "I must go down—"

"To Mr. Furlong? Yes, you said he was waiting for you."

"I want to give him the semblance of a hearing," Moira said.

She knew she was going to Furlong, knew what she was going to say to him, but her eyes and heart were full of the picture of a dreamy boy who had so loved his vision that it had come to him in flesh and blood for a space to break his heart.

She found Furlong in the library—the room where he had so often wooed her. She looked about it with a kind of contempt. He came toward her with the air of quiet domesticity he had thought it wise to assume since their new relations had been established, and said, pleasantly:

"You have kept me waiting." Then, as he noted her expression, "Is anything the matter?" he added.

"Very much," she said. "I am told that you have deceived me about Mr. MacDermott. Is it true?"

Furlong scarcely hesitated; he knew that she could find out the truth. He hoped, by throwing himself on her mercy, to be forgiven.

"It is true; it has tortured me for weeks—unspeakably," he said. "Not to have told you was my worst weakness. I have been a wretched coward, but now you know all the evil that is in me, Moira, and from this time forth—"

She was looking at him curiously.

"First I thought I loved you, and when I found I did not, at least I respected you; but now you've lost that."

"You're cruel, Moira," he cried, starting and trembling.

"I can't trust my life to a man who could treat any one as you treated Mr. MacDermott," she said. "You may build up a great career, but it's on the wrong foundation—hollow. I should be entombed."

"But give me a chance—a hope—"

"Absolutely, no; I cannot. Good-bye. I wish with all my heart that you had not failed me."

He could not realize that she was leaving him; he watched her vacantly as she went into the hall and up the stairway. He was unaware of his expression until Ida came swiftly from the music-room.

"What's the matter? Laugh — talk; they're watching you—"

He recovered himself and uttered a few random words. Then, as she motioned him to come with her to the music-room, longing for sympathy, he told her what had happened.

Meantime, Moira returned to Mayme, who was still lying on the bed in a helpless pose that made Moira's heart ache. She rose from her pillow and looked at Moira tensely. Then she dropped back and said, wearily:

"I know; you've broken it off with Furlong. Then you don't love him at all?"

"No."

Mayme got up painfully.

"Then you're free. I'm going to tell Hugh so. Don't know that you'll ever care for him, but it 'll give him some hope. Did you know the lieutenant-governor's dead, and he's governor? Yes, and he doesn't care. Why don't you go and tell him you're glad he's governor? That will do more for him than all my love can."

"Oh, the cruelty of it!" cried Moira, passionately; "the expense of spirit— But I'll go to him. He shall live."

"Oh, my Lord!" groaned Mayme, "you've had everything, and I—"

"You've built everything for yourself. If only I dared tell you what I think of you!"

Mayme smiled wanly.

"Well, it's something of a comfort. Maybe I can go on trying—"

"Go on trying?"

"Oh, I got a devilish streak while you were gone," said Mayme, arranging her hair in front of the glass. "I thought I'd react after my two years of virtue and bite and scratch at life."

"You can't; you're too good."

Mayme paused.

"Well, I can't honestly say I want these two years blotted out of my life. I guess I'll pull through." She kissed Moira, and added, suddenly: "Come with me; he'll be waiting."

XXXIII

THE DREAM COMES TRUE

THE two drove to Callahan's house without exchanging a word, but they clasped each other's hands close. Callahan met them at the door, and a great light of understanding crossed his face. He took both Mayme's strong hands in his own, and said, "God bless you, my gurrl!"

Mayme brushed by him and went up-stairs, and then Callahan turned to Moira.

"Welcome, my burrd of blessing," he said, softly; "but I wish you had been bought less dear."

Mayme entered MacDermott's room and knelt by his pillow. The nurse slept heavily in Mrs. Haraghey's room. Mayme bent over and kissed his forehead passionately.

"Hugh, dear," she said, "she's free! I told her it was a lie! She's broken off with Furlong—doesn't love him!"

He flushed, and closed his eyes wearily.

"And I," said Mayme, with a cracked laugh—"I think I'll marry Servan. He's a good enough sort, and he relies on me. I can, I guess, and I think I'd like to put a spoke

in Ida Grey's wheel. Then she'll set her cap for Furlong; you watch."

With this futile sheath of cynicism Mayme was covering the immensity of her own sacrifice.

Hugh closed his eyes.

"I'm too tired," he murmured.

Mayme bent over him for the last time.

"Dear, she'll come soon. Maybe she will love you sometime. But you'll never, never again find any one to care as I have; even she can't."

She put down his hand lingeringly on the white counterpane, and looked long at his sick, white face with the heavy, closed eyes. Then she went out noiselessly.

When Moira entered Hugh's door she stopped, motionless, searching his thin face, so wan beneath the tumbled black hair. And suddenly she knew that Furlong, since his first word of love, had been going further and further away from her and Hugh had been coming nearer. She had never absolutely trusted Furlong, and she had always trusted Hugh. In utter astonishment at the mysterious ways of a woman's heart, she felt that she could never again be sure of an act—a feeling. Then she drew near, and when Hugh looked up she was bending over him as Mayme had bent.

"Of course it's a dream," he whispered; "you always come—in dreams."

"No," she said, "I am here and real. I am come to tell you how I reverence you. You've always been true to your ideal. I want your forgiveness for my lack of faith. I should have known, as Miss Broomer did, that—" She hesitated. "You will forgive me?"

"'I'VE BEEN SO BLIND; I DIDN'T KNOW MY OWN HEART'"

"There can be no such word for you," he said, "dearest —loveliest—" He lifted his hand feebly, and she took it in both hers. "Dearest, loveliest," he repeated; "but you're not the best woman in the world—"

"No," she said, "Miss Broomer is that."

"No, I can't let you say it," he whispered, "and I can't *feel* it myself—"

"But you know she's as great a soul as you."

It seemed to him that they were together in the old Kilmanan orchard. The roses glowed red in the garden, the peaches grew soft on the old wall, and the birds sang loud, loud, a song not for a dreamer, but for a man with a deed to do in the land of the living.

"Are you really here? Do you want me to be governor?" he asked.

"Yes, I want to see your work. Ah, that will be honest work!"

"It's wonderful to be really friends at last," he said. "I ought never to have hoped for more. But you know I'll never love any one else, and you'll let me tell you sometimes —and I'll try not to hope too much—or dream—"

It takes so much work and sorrow and expense of spirit to make a dream come true in the land of the living!

"I've been so blind," she murmured; "I didn't know my own heart."

Again he tasted the poignant sweetness of the old orchard, and now the voices of the birds had sunk to a croon, and she knelt at a homely, fostering task between long rows of green.

"Oh, I know it's all a dream," he said, wearily, "and

I'll wake up and find you gone, as you always go—so far—"

She laid her cheek to his.

"No dream; you will always find me. I shall not be gone. It would hurt me too much—"

He groped for her hand.

"I love you," she said.

THE END