

his employer, had been advanced from his humble position to that of manager of the works, and finally made a partner in the concern. Some years later the senior partner died, leaving to John the greater part of his vast wealth.

But through all the passing years John had never forgotten the eviction scene, nor his days in prison. News had come to him of Sir Reginald O'Brien's financial embarrassment, and a trusty agent in Ireland had been instructed to let the baronet have large loans on easy terms. So freely, indeed, was the money advanced to Sir Reginald that he saw no necessity for curtailing his lavish expenditure. He had gambled and entertained his friends as of old, till one day a call had come for the money lent. That call the baronet was entirely unprepared to meet; and at length the estate bestowed on 'a Queen's O'Brien' by Elizabeth was to be sold by public auction. Of that estate John O'Connor was resolved to be the purchaser.

The stir and bustle on the platform roused John from the reverie into which he had drifted, and he hastily sought a carriage. It was occupied by a lady who moved slightly to make way for him. John thanked her, noting with approval her simple, well-made tailored costume, her frank, unembarrassed manner, and cultured voice. There was something familiar, too, in the poise of her head and the contour of her face. John's brows met in a frown. He had surely seen the lady somewhere. But where? Then he remembered Helen Marston's photograph.

The two travellers entered readily enough into conversation, and John was surprised to find how quickly the time had sped when he alighted at the station nearest his mother's home. His fellow-traveller descended from the carriage also, passed to where a high dog-cart stood waiting, and was driven away before John had found a vehicle to convey him to his destination.

'What a perfect little home, mother!' John exclaimed, as he threw away a cigar stump and sat down by the white-haired lady's side. Mrs. O'Connor had that innate refinement so often seen among Irish peasant women.

'Isn't it?' Mrs. O'Connor said smilingly, as her eyes turned to the garden that lay between the house and the high road. The house itself was low and long.

'Who found it for you, mother?' John questioned.

'Helen Marston. After you went away I lived, you know, for two years in Dublin. I made Helen's acquaintance there.'

'Who is Miss Marston?' John asked.

'Who is she? Well, really, I don't know. I never inquired. She took the house for me, and then, when the money came so plentifully from you, she bought it outright. There is only an acre or so of land, you know.'

'She picked up the furniture from time to time, and laid out the garden,' Mrs. O'Connor went on. At least she planned the garden.'

There came the sound of horses' hoofs from the highway, and Mrs. O'Connor peered through her glasses at the sound ceased suddenly.

'Good gracious!' she cried. 'Why, here is Helen!' and with an agility worthy of fewer years Mrs. O'Connor hastened from the room and hurried down the box-bordered walk to the garden gate. John withdrew from the window.

'No, indeed, Helen,' John heard his mother say a few minutes later: 'why should you go away because John is here? The house is big enough for us all. And, anyway, the dog-cart has gone. I can't say I am very sorry that an outbreak of typhoid at Annaghmore Hall has driven you here.'

'That—and other things,' the voice of John's fellow-traveller said, with a faint sigh, and the next moment Mrs. O'Connor was proudly introducing 'my son John' to Miss Marston.

There followed for the hard-headed business man three or four days different from all days he had known. He and Helen Marston spent them roaming about the countryside in the most beautiful season of the year. The freshness of early summer was everywhere, in the woods, in the meadows, on the hills, in the soft blue of the sky, and the songs of the birds. Miss Marston was a well-educated, well-read woman; and later years had remedied the defects of John O'Connor's earlier education.

One morning, when John descended to the sitting-room, he found Miss Marston gone.

'And I'm afraid she has some trouble,' his mother supplemented. 'She cried saying "good-bye."'

'What kind of trouble?' John asked.

'I don't know. She never spoke much of herself or her people, you see; but I expect money troubles. Her mother died when she was a baby; and her father, I gathered from a chance word or two, is extravagant, and often pressed for money.'

'If that is all—' John laughed softly, and opened a letter that lay on the table.

'I, too, must be off, mother. My man in Dublin has bought an — some property, and I am required to go there. Do you write to Miss Marston?'

Mrs. O'Connor shook her head.

'No. Of course a letter sent to Annaghmore Hall would be forwarded. I never knew an address to which to write. She just dropped in now and then for a day, or perhaps two. This last has been her longest visit.'

John went to the Irish capital to complete the purchase of his old enemy's estate, and learned that Sir Reginald O'Brien was anxious for a personal interview. The two men met in a hotel in O'Connell street. The elder had no recollection of the lad he had sent to prison

years before. He had aged greatly, and almost at once explained why he had wished to see John.

'I have learned,' he said, in the cold, even tones John remembered so well, 'that you are unmarried, and, of course, I know of your wealth. Could a marriage be arranged—such things are common, I believe—between you and my daughter? She—'

'Stop, sir, stop!' John interrupted hastily. He had no ill-feeling against Sir Reginald's daughter, and the proposal shocked his finer feelings. 'What you mention is utterly impossible. I am not married, but I hope soon to be. Besides, you don't know me. I am John O'Connor, the lad you sent to prison years ago. Perhaps you remember?'

Sir Reginald pondered. Then he rose to his feet.

'Ah! I see! This is your revenge.' He laughed oddly. 'A very good revenge. I am sorry I trouble you, Mr. O'Connor.'

John left the hotel, and passed into the bright sunshine, feeling, somehow, little pleased with his repayment of the old debt. A dozen paces from the door he ran up against a lady.

'Pardon —,' he began, and started. 'Helen! Miss Marston! How lucky! May I turn with you? I wish to ask you a question.'

'How serious you look! Certainly—ask on,' Miss Marston said.

'Will you marry me?'

'Oh! There was consternation in the cry. Helen laid her hand on John's arm.

'Please come this way. It is quieter, and I must tell you at last. No, John, I can't marry you. I promised last night to marry another person—if he will have me.' She laughed bitterly.

'If he will have you! Helen!'

'Yes. It is this way. I am Helen O'Brien. Marston was my mother's name. I was so sorry for your mother, long ago, and she wouldn't have let me help her, let me care for her had she known I was her landlord's daughter. Don't you see?'

John signified assent.

'But now?' he said.

'The mortgagee of my father's home and estate has bought it. We are poor, miserably poor, my father and I. Somebody told my father that this man, the buyer of the place, was unmarried, and last night I promised my father that I would marry him if he asked me. Oh, don't think too hardly of me, John! I didn't know you cared! And my father is old, and the doctors say his heart is weak. I was afraid to oppose him, afraid of bringing on one of his bad attacks. Oh, John, why are you laughing?'

'My dear, my dear, it is all right! I have bought your home. I am the man you have promised to marry. If I will have you! Oh, Helen, thank God you are my enemy's daughter!'—*Benziger's Magazine*.

## Lower Hutt

(From an occasional correspondent.)

Two members of the Lower Hutt Hibernian Society were successful at the recent municipal election—Bro. E. A. Bunny was again returned as Mayor with a good majority, and Bro. M. J. Hodgins, P.P., was returned as councillor. Bro. C. A. Seymour, postmaster, Lower Hutt, is at present president of this branch. Bro. Seymour is one of the old school of Hibernians, he being one of the oldest in the Dominion.

## Opunake

(From an occasional correspondent.)

Despite a very heavy downpour of rain on Wednesday week, the Opunake Town Hall was filled to its utmost by an audience who came to assist and enjoy the social held to raise funds for furthering the presbytery bazaar there. One and all entered with zest into the proceedings, and the committee, headed by the energetic secretary (Mr. Brennan), left nothing undone to make the affair a success. During the evening songs were rendered by Miss A. Hughes and Mr. J. Hughes, recitations by the Rev. Father Bergin, and humorous stories by Mr. J. Moriarty. An excellent supper, presided over by Messrs. Brennan and Callaghan, was greatly appreciated. The bazaar funds will be much augmented by the receipts.

Mr. W. G. Bright, watchmaker, jeweller, silversmith, and optician, Westport, has a splendid selection of choice and artistic jewellery and presentation goods in stock....

Messrs. F. W. Hagedorn and Sons, Palmerston street, Westport, have earned an excellent reputation for high-class furniture, made by skilled workmen. They guarantee their goods to give every satisfaction....

Mr. H. G. Bedell, merchant tailor and costume maker, Palmerston street, Westport, directs attention to his superior stock of serges, worsteds, and vicunas, and guarantees the fit and style of all work done by him....