

bestowed on the young people as a temporary residence, old Humphrey having stoutly refused to quit his old pawn-office parlor) the Sub-Inspector's wife failed to rise to the height of Mr. Flibbert's ideal as dismally as she had done in the gilded drawing-rooms of the Depot. She was like a seedling of gentility which would not come up, and all her new friends, and even her own mother, were engaged daily in rooting up the earth about her to inquire why she was not coming on. With Frank Harman, singularly enough, alone of her husband's set, she established some approach to a friendly alliance—such alliance as a sickly flower in a London back-yard may be said to have struck up with the great blank walls which do not fall and crush it. She called Miss Harman "ma'am" with the sweetest good faith, and seemed to be honestly apologising for being in the way when she called; and that genial grenadier was so touched with the poor child's simplicity that she, as it were, took her in her lap as caressingly as if she was a silky little Blenheim spaniel, and said she was a great deal too good for that mercenary little Flibbert, and peremptorily pitched into the fire a packet of leaflets against Popery which Miss Deborah had prescribed for Lily as improving literature.

His wife's want of social enterprise was a grievous trial to the Sub-Inspector, who, however, accepted her shortcomings without the least intentional unkindness, and set himself to reconquer Miss Harman's favor with more assiduity than he had ever dreamt of devoting to the winning of poor Lily's love. He was much consoled for his absence during the two historic events of the week by the failure of his subordinate, Head-Constable Muldudden, either to apprehend the American conspirator or to elicit the smallest scrap of evidence against Quish's murderers. There were not wanting in the force men who, either toadying to Mr. Flibbert's greatness, or envious of the well-known legal attainments of the Head-Constable, were ready with specious stories of how the American Captain was seen escaping through the shrubbery owing to Muldudden's neglect to place a policeman on the postern gate; and how a police patrol were bound to have taken Quish's murderers red-handed only that the same jolter-headed Muldudden had instructed the patrol to take the Coom-hola road instead of that over the Bauherlin Mountains on that particular evening. Flibbert, who naturally regarded the swoop on the American Captain and the murder as attempts of a designing subordinate to take a mean advantage of his absence, was, if possible, even more sarcastic on the arrangements which Muldudden had made than on those which he had omitted; and when that discredited commander ventured to suggest from certain appearances that the American Captain might possibly be lying hidden in the belfry, the Sub-Inspector said: "Don't be a donkey, Muldudden!" in the hearing of a whole day-room-full of grinning subordinates.

"Well, sir," said the unfortunate Head-Constable, making a last gallant rally of his forces, "if you'll refer to page 96 of *Humphrey's Justice of the Peace* you'll find—"

"How to let murderers and conspirators slip through my fingers, no doubt," sneered Flibbert, who thought his own remark so crushing that he determined to mention it incidentally to the County-Inspector. Mr. Flibbert, in fact, took up charge of the peace of the community with the air of a *Curios Dentatus* recalled by his country from his Sabine cottage. Every day that the American Captain remained uncaught and the Bauherlin Mountain murder untraced he looked a deeper and deeper fellow for preserving the secret so long; and now that he had Humphrey Dargan's iron safe behind him, and a public looking up to him as its preserver from the horrors of rebellion and assassination, he had no longer any false modesty about asserting his own importance as one of the Great Powers of Drumshaughlin society. He was slightly taken aback when, proposing to himself a cosy, confidential chat with Lord Drumshaughlin touching the peace of the district and the follies of his son, Harry, his card was answered with an intimation that, if he had any message for Lord Drumshaughlin, he might send it in by the maid-servant; but Miss Harman and Mr. Flibbert quite agreed that Lord Drumshaughlin was an old tyrant who was probably mad and who certainly drank; and they agreed still more cheerfully that, between the Harman influence

and the Flibbert influence, Humphrey Dargan's election was as safe a prediction as the next eclipse of the moon announced in the almanacs. Young Lionel Dargan, who remained in Drumshaughlin smoking eighteenpenny cigars on the Club steps with the Sub-Inspector, and discovering some object of sudden interest in the sky when Ken Rohan passed on the other side, was only tearing himself from the embraces of his college chum, Lord Shinrone's son, for a few days longer to see whether his father's election to the Club might not be triumphantly followed by his own.

"By George, here's Drumshaughlin! looking as touchy as the very—gout. Come to carry our gombeen friend, of course!" cried old Grogan, who was one of a group before the reading-room fire on the evening of the ballot. There was an unprecedented muster of members, and the regular set of army men and evergreen old bachelors, who spent their evenings over their spirits-and-water, card-tables, and Tory papers, were amazed at the number of unexpected ghosts that arose as on a general resurrection night—those queer anchorites of the desert whom county society loses sight of from time to time, nobody can tell how: men who have become so absorbed in the breeding of shorthorns that they only turn up like the shorthorns on cattle-show days, with apparently a strong dash of the shorthorn strain in their own ways, and even countenances; men who are reputed to have had attacks only known to the doctor, or to have been married to their housekeepers, or to have been reduced to living off their own poultry-yard; or again, men smitten with some household grief, some adored daughter cut off in the May-morn of her days, some son banished in disgrace to the Colonies, and who are seldom seen out of their sepulchres except at some pressing call of public duty—the Grand Jury, the election of a Chairman of Board of Guardians, or an insurrection. "Harman must have made a deuce of a whip," remarked Major Grogan to his friend Captain Brandeth, as all those unaccustomed spirits of health or goblins damned glided into the rooms—men pale with the gracious dignity of grief, men who paid their debts in cruel wrinkles, men whose eyes and noses were beginning to wear the ignoble purple livery of Drink, and men who only looked in for the night from Aix or Egypt as a composition with their consciences for neglected duty, as a beauty might call into a cottage after a riotous London season.

"I did think my old friend would not have thrown in his weight against us on this occasion," said Admiral French, with his sad old courtly smile, as Lord Drumshaughlin made for his corner with outstretched hand.

"Why? How do you mean?"

"Well, I cannot help thinking that you might have left this to your agent, Drumshaughlin, and left us old fellows some chance of a stand in our last ditch."

"Look around you, and see how Harman has done his whipping-up. I never mean to be seen in this room again. *Morituri te salutamus*. If we had not been handicapped by having your name against us, indeed—"

"My name! Who has dared to use my name? Why, my dear Admiral, my name and my vote will be for hunting the fellow like a vagabond dog with the most ignominious article you can find in the kitchen tied to his infernal impudent tail."

Admiral French and his sedate group of county magistrates started delightedly, as if a bombshell sailing down upon them had burst in bonbons instead of splinters of old iron. "Why, we have only to send that around, and all is over," the Admiral exclaimed. "Ralph, this is more like the old friend I once had—do you remember the night some young dare-devils presented the Lord Chancellor at the Historical with a face as black as a Christy Minstrel, Ralph?—and the night of the row at the Turkish Embassy—how that fat old Pasha did yell when you knocked him over into the flower-pots and walked off with the lady in your arms?—and do you recollect that morning with the French sergens-de-ville, coming home from—Ah, dear! ah, dear!" and the two old fellows fell on one another's shoulders and shook hands and laughed and (I rather suspect) cried for old times sadly-joyous sake. "Well, well, I am not sure that things have grown so much better in these wise days. I am told there is not a single nobleman's son in Trinity College now, except poor old Shinrone's, who is hired out to a tutor as an advertisement. They have fallen back on the agents' sons, and the bailiffs'.

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